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APRIL 28, 1936

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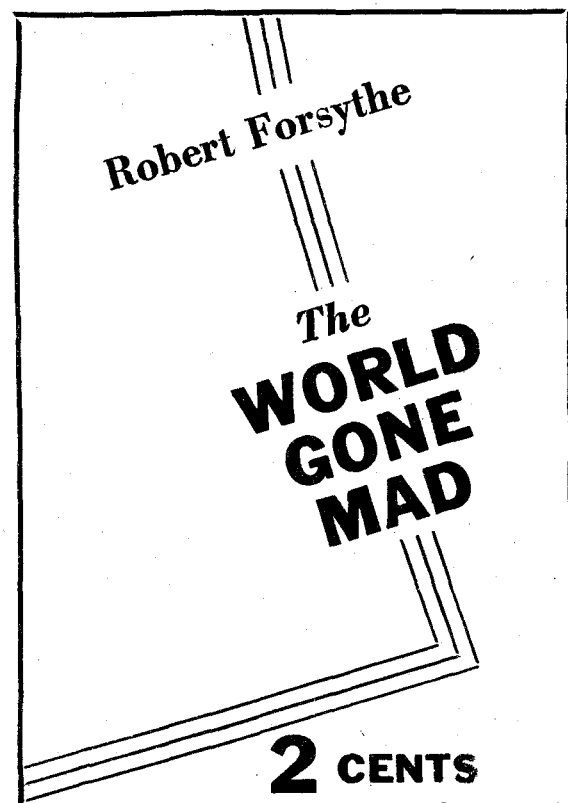
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APRIL 28, 1936

Message to Gomez

THE Cuban pot is boiling. The Supreme Court, for the first time since the fall of the Machado tyranny, has censured the military dictatorship of Batista—and, by implication, the actions of United States Ambassador Caffery who supports this ghastly regime of terror.

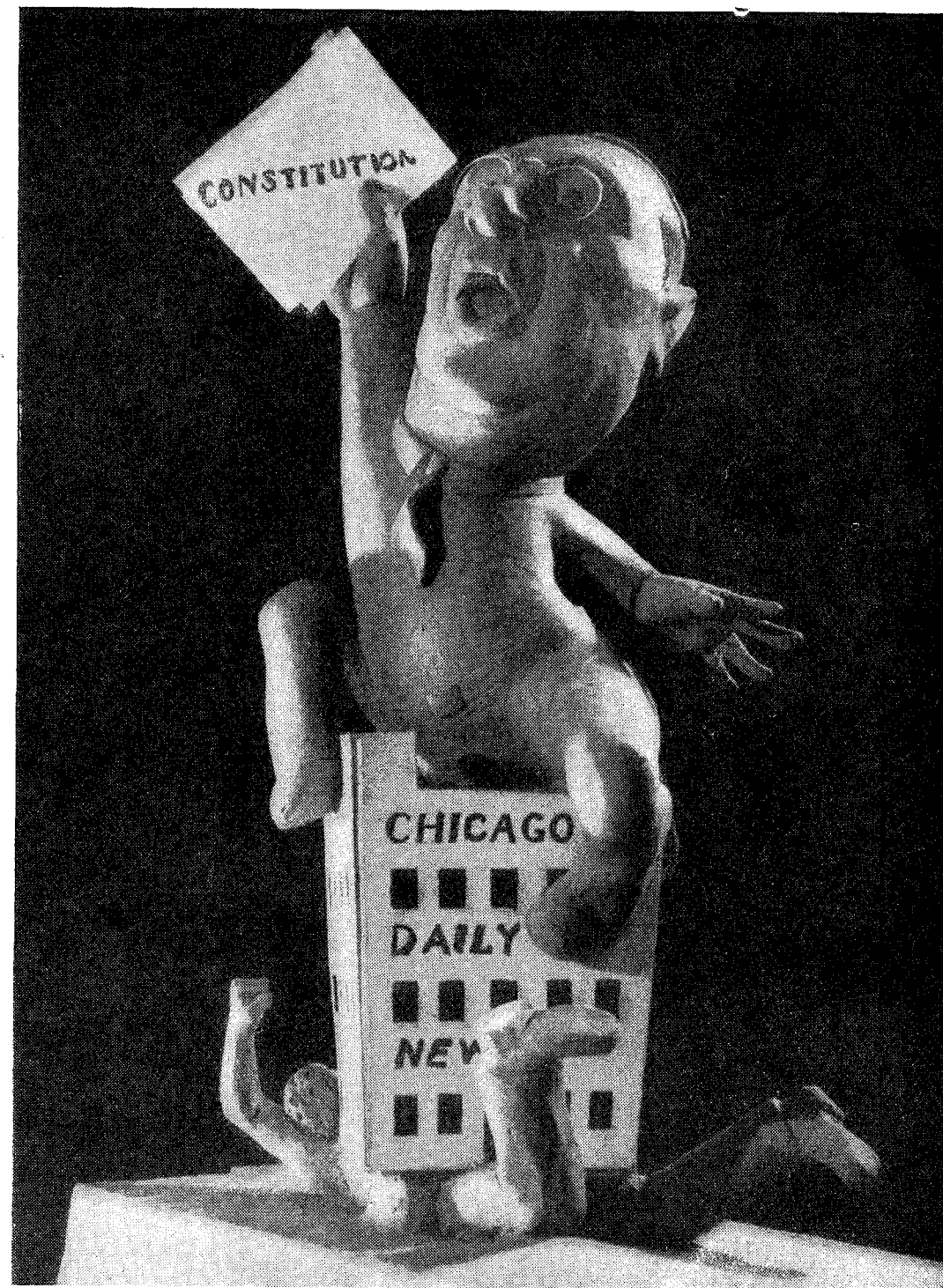
The visit of President-Elect Gomez to the United States at this time represents an attempt to strengthen his personal position and that of his political entourage, with President Roosevelt and financial interests in this country. This action, however, directed as it is against Batista, furnishes American friends of the Cuban people an opportunity to influence him toward a more enlightened rule in Cuba. The American people must impress Gomez with the necessity of promulgating the amnesty for political prisoners so long delayed by Batista.

Shipowners' Conspiracy

WHEN the S.S. Santa Rosa arrived in San Francisco from New York where seamen are on strike, longshoremen going to work were met by a mass picket line. Upon consideration, all marine unions agreed that the longshoremen should unload the Santa Rosa. Yet after this decision had been made, after the picket line had been removed, the shipowners proclaimed a lockout on the pretext that longshoremen refused to work the Santa Rosa.

A few days before, longshoremen in San Pedro had refused to touch the Santa Rosa's cargo. The shipowners took no action. Instead, they speeded the ship to San Francisco where they hoped the longshoremen would balk at unloading it. When this did not occur, they still went ahead with their scheduled lockout. They demanded the removal of local union leaders elected through secret ballot by an overwhelming majority. They would not deal with the local I.L.A. or hire through the union hall—both actions being direct violations of the Arbitration Award.

When shipowners can dictate the removal of militant union leaders (in this case, Harry Bridges), they can



KNOX OVER ILLINOIS

Robert Cronbach

also dictate who shall have these positions. With men selected by the employers holding union offices, the shipowners can rule these organizations. Naturally they desire such an arrangement: in reality, this company unionism would wipe out the gains made by the workers in the 1934 strike. To break one union means to break the solidarity of the various marine unions and to do away with the Maritime Federation.

The shipowners, despite the support of the Red-baiting press, despite the boycott of San Francisco harbor (the shipping companies refuse to run scheduled boats into the port), despite intimidation and cooperation from the

government and from reactionary union bureaucrats in the East, now find themselves confronted by a powerful unity among all the marine unions. The longshoremen's actions have received the endorsement of the San Francisco Central Trades and Labor Council, the Seattle body, the whole of West Coast organized labor. Even the I.L.A. district president, William J. Lewis, long a supporter of the Ryan machine in New York which resents Bridges' militancy and popular support by organized labor, must endorse Bridges because of the solid mass backing this militant leader has received.

While workers in the West fight the shipowners and the vigilantes, the sea-

men in the East continue in the fourth week of their strike. Here, too, reaction attempts to prevent militant organization. The small savings of underpaid seamen are exhausted. Food, clothing, shelter are their immediate necessities. To answer this need, the Citizens' Committee for Striking Seamen, 21 Bank Street, New York, has organized middle-class and liberal groups to raise money, to obtain donations of food and clothing. Among those sponsoring the Committee are Eugene P. Connolly, of the Knickerbocker Democrats, Congressman Vito Marcantonio, Heywood Broun and Hoyt S. Haddock of the Radio Telegraphers.

East and West, the struggle intensifies in the drive to combat the growth of rank-and-file control of militant unions. In New York, the alliance between workers and middle-class supporters aids democratic, trade-union organization. On both Atlantic and Pacific coasts the attack on the marine unions is the vanguard of the offensive by reaction.

Ethiopia at Bay

WHEN Italy first invaded Ethiopia, the world was shocked by the ruthlessness of Italy's aggression against a peaceful people and amazed by the courage and ability of this small, independent state to resist a large, imperialist power. Ethiopia could count on favorable results only so long as it kept to guerrilla warfare. But the Ethiopian command, overwhelmed by its successes, decided to meet the Italian army in open warfare. This turned out to be a costly tactical blunder.

Now, as the Italians attempt to force Ethiopia to capitulate before the rapidly approaching rainy season invalidates a good part of their recent gains, the Italian lines of communications become elongated in the difficult terrain. For long stretches they are subject to raids of small detachments of defenders. The Ethiopians may still rally their forces, by no means crushed, and cause the fascist army serious concern.

The African conflict has revealed the inability of the League of Nations both to halt hostilities and to deprive Italy of the gains already made. Mussolini, at first frankly concerned by the threat of sanctions, now brazenly demands the complete occupation of Ethiopia as payment for peace. The Italian army encroaches into the Lake Tana area where the headwaters of the Blue Nile



Limbach's cartoon of the author of "Are Teachers Seditious?" which appears on page 10

have been considered by Great Britain sufficient reason for regarding this region as a special sphere of British influence. Even after hostilities had begun, Britain refused to urge sanctions; as recently as the past few weeks it has found excuses for postponing oil sanctions and closing the Suez Canal to Italian freighters and transports. Now Britain warns Mussolini that if the League fails to act decisively, Italy may be forced to deal privately with the British empire.

Disagreement between France and England paralyzes any immediate definite action on the part of the League against the aggressor. France looks on Italy as a potential ally against Germany and is therefore not anxious to thwart Mussolini's African adventure. The coming French elections are used as a pretext for delaying further sanctions at least until May 11. If the League fails, Italy's past actions will have dealt League authority a staggering blow, in which case any aggressor in the future may feel certain that contradictions between imperialist nations will aid "expansionist" adventures. Thus, Italy's ability to circumvent the League directly encourages Hitler's plans for an attack on the Soviet Union; it also strengthens the Japanese militarists in China as they raid the borders of Outer Mongolia and Siberia in preparation for the coming "Great War" against the U.S.S.R.

Impartial?

THE Nation for April 15 contained an editorial on "The Coming Labor Party" which for clarity and forcefulness is entitled to the respect of everyone seriously concerned with the growth of a Farmer-Labor Party. The work of the Communist Party in supporting and building this movement is by this time common knowledge. Nevertheless The Nation of April 22 in a long review of Earl Browder's *What Is Communism?* wonders if today we "are not witnessing the disintegration" of the Communist Party.

One week The Nation editorially approves of a great work in which Communists are devotedly collaborating and the next week The Nation deplores the theoretical "line" of which this work is an outgrowth. Is it a case of the right hand not knowing what the left hand does? It is strange to find a journal of opinion which prides itself on its "impartiality," giving Earl Browder's book to a reviewer whose political activities and writings have for some time marked him as distinctly hostile to the Communists. Could such a reviewer conceivably furnish The Nation with an "impartial" article?

The same issue (April 22) betrays a number of other dubious editorial assignments. The aftermath of the EPIC movement in California is discussed by another writer equally prejudiced in political viewpoint. In this case the anti-Communist malice creeps in through innuendo.

There are other instances in the same issue—a glaring instance is the review of the Webbs' classic study—which make us wonder if The Nation has abandoned its avowed impartiality. What conclusion should one draw from the fact that The Nation assigns important Communist writing for discussion by bitter opponents of the Communists? One is left with the suspicion that perhaps The Nation is a house of editors divided against itself, a house in which the most contradictory ideas are voiced, and in which the total result is an unprecisely articulated confusion.

Ambivalent Mr. Thomas

NORMAN THOMAS in The Socialist Call (April 18) obscures the drive toward a Farmer-Labor Party which gathers strength in the unions, among farmers, unemployed and middle-class groups. His attitude not only reflects his usual hesitancy and shifting

position, but provides him with a convenient means of avoiding a clear commitment on the Farmer-Labor Party at the present time. Thomas narrows the issue to the advisability of running a candidate for president in the coming election. And then, as if to negate his former correct stand opposing Roosevelt's reelection, he lends passive aid to the so-called "Labor's Non-Partisan League" which openly advocates the return of Roosevelt to office.

"After that," Thomas hedges, "maybe the Non-Partisan League will organize a Labor Party"—thereby playing into the hands of the Old-Guard leadership. Furthermore, Thomas impedes the growth of a true Farmer-Labor Party by dismissing the present drive toward state and local organizations. In warning workers not "to support a little coalition of radicals who consciously water down their program," he tacitly gives comfort to such reactionaries within the Socialist Party as Mayor Daniel Hoan of Milwaukee.

Experience should teach Thomas the danger of wavering. Mayor Hoan attacked the Communists and militant Socialists who attempted to build a progressive movement about him in the Milwaukee elections. Though running on what he called a Farmer-Labor Pro-

gressive Federation ticket, Hoan attempted to dissociate himself from the support of Mrs. Meta Berger, left-wing Socialist. He indulged in Red-baiting rivalling that of the Liberty League opposition. Consequently, although he managed to retain office by a slim majority, Socialists lost their positions in other civic offices.

Far different are the results in Sheboygan, Wis., where the Farmer-Labor Progressive Federation represented a militant United Front. Here Communist and left-wing Socialist support was welcomed. Here the unions and other progressive forces felt the strength of the ticket and endorsed it. In consequence, the Farmer-Labor ticket elected eight of its ten candidates to the City Council. Similarly, in Michigan, Mary Zuk, leader of last year's meat strike, was elected to the City Council of Hamtramck on a United Front ticket, the first successful labor candidate in Wayne County.

Thomas disregards the actions of Illinois, Detroit, Akron, where labor unions and their allies have endorsed the building of state and local Farmer-Labor Parties, he raises the Red scare on the basis of "remembering the old disruptive tactics of the Communists." This is William Green's argument and

Matthew Woll's. Norman Thomas turns his back on the experiences of the People's Front in Spain and France. Instead of being in the vanguard in the fight to build such a People's Front against war and fascism in the United States, Thomas hangs back, taking refuge in outworn phrases to defend his own ambivalence. If Thomas seriously wishes to participate in the popular struggle against war and fascism, he must realize the need for a true People's Front in this country. In political terms, this can only mean a national Farmer-Labor Party this year.

Dramatic Necessity

IT WAS not exactly unexpected when the drama-critics of the Right greeted the *Case of Clyde Griffiths* with ax in hand. After all, the Group Theater was propagating an unequivocally working-class analysis of America today; it could hardly be expected that bourgeois critics would applaud and by applauding recommend the play to theater-goers. Once again many people took comfort in the notion that such an untimely death of a working-class play would never have happened if it had been given by a working-class organization—by the Theater Union, for example.

While few of us would argue with this conclusion there is nevertheless a danger in the logic: the danger of taking working-class theaters for granted. Since the Theater Union's first production of *Peace on Earth* two years ago most of us have cavalierly imagined that at least one important working-class theater was securely entrenched, without realizing that every Theater Union play has involved bitter difficulties of all kinds, production and box-office problems which could be solved only by tireless labor and burning devotion.

Today, the Theater Union has mounted a play whose story is quite new to American audiences: the life of a farm-village under Italian fascism. It is scarcely necessary to emphasize the significance of such a theme; NEW MASSES readers realize this fact and do not need to be urged to see *Bitter Stream*. But their individual attendance is not enough. Their support of this anti-fascist theater production is an immediate necessity if *Bitter Stream* is to reach the vastly larger audiences to whom its message can bring the mass-clarification so important in these days of fascist danger in America.

new MASSES

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		Cronbach.	

EDITORS:

JOSEPH FREEMAN, MICHAEL GOLD, RUSSELL T. LIMBACH, BRUCE MINTON, ISIDOR SCHNEIDER

Contributing Editors: GRANVILLE HICKS, JOSHUA KUNITZ, LOREN MILLER

WILLIAM BROWDER, Business Manager

WILLIAM RANDORF, Circulation Manager

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Labor Spies and Jew-Baiters

THE Roosevelt administration, under fire from the most reactionary sections of the capitalist class, requires popular support. It has therefore initiated the greatest campaign of official muckraking in the history of this country. Roosevelt wishes to retain the "best" features of capitalism by exposing its worst. The Nye Committee recently revealed some of Wall Street's war preparations against foreign powers. Now the LaFollette Committee has revealed what is tantamount to permanent civil war in American industry. This is a revelation only for the so-called general public. Both the captains of industry and the trade unions have known the truth for years. Class rule is not an idle phrase. Big Business has governed industry through force, espionage, frame-ups and murder.

Now the LaFollette investigation has shown that American industrialists pay \$80,000,000 a year to a national spy and munitions ring. There are over 200 labor-spy agencies in this country with some 40,000 operatives. Three detective agencies, Pinkerton, Burns and Thiel, have *recently* employed 135,000 spies against American workers. The labor spy is supplemented by the armed thug, the "noble" who helps the "fink" to break strikes. In their war against organized labor, the textile bosses framed the bombing in Burlington, North Carolina, through private detectives loaned from the Frick corporation in Pennsylvania; and a plot was laid to murder Francis J. Gorman, textile labor leader.

It is time the American people realized that Big Business maintains its power and profit by the vilest and most sanguinary means. Not only do the army and the police of the capitalist state enforce the will of the bankers and manufacturers upon those who produce this country's wealth, but industry has its own vast private army of assassins and spies to crush labor's demands for better living conditions.

And the same capitalists who drag us into foreign wars and dominate the people at home through force and fraud are now busy hatching fascist campaigns which bear a startling resemblance to those of the Nazis. This the investigation headed by Senator Black has abundantly shown. The Lib-

erty League, the Minute Men of Today, the Sentinels of the Republic, the Crusaders, the Farmers Independence Councils are spreading anti-semitism, hatred of the Negro, demands for an American Hitler. Alexander Lincoln, Boston banker, president of the Sentinels, writes that the "Jewish threat" to the United States is "a real one." W. Cleveland Runyon, New Jersey lawyer, writes to Lincoln about the "Jewish brigade Roosevelt took to Washington" and claims that "the old-line Americans of \$1,200 a year want a Hitler." Professor W. A. Wilson of Yale proposes to the head of the Sentinels the repeal of the "due process" clause in the Constitution. Not content with dominating the courts, Big Business wishes to deprive the American people of every legal right still possible under capitalism. The reaction has grown so bold that Congressman Tom Blanton of Texas actually has the gall to publish an anti-Semitic tirade in the Congressional Record in which he referred to a Washington publisher as a "kike."

And who backs these fascist agitators with money and political power? The du Ponts, General Motors, Sun Oil, Weirton Steel, Mr. Stotesbury of J. P. Morgan and Company, John J. Raskob.

The New York Post "prefers" to take the view that these bankers and industrialists "didn't realize any of this when they made their contributions." THE NEW MASSES differs with this "liberal" preference. Like Germany, the United States will have its noble

souls who will "prefer" to believe that the fascists put one over on Big Business as well as on the workers, farmers and middle classes. But if Germany has taught us anything it is that fascism is the conscious instrument of capitalism. The du Ponts, Sloans, Morgans and Raskobs are no children. They never hand out money blindly. They know perfectly well what the Sentinels of the Republic, the Liberty League and the like are up to. Upon Big Business directly lies the guilt for war preparations, for industrial espionage and murder, for the deliberate spread of anti-semitism, for the conscious agitation on behalf of fascist ideas and practices. The enemy of the American people is American Big Business. The revelations of the Committees headed by Senators Nye, LaFollette and Black show that the danger of fascism and war is real and immediate. There is no use in appealing, as some "liberals" do, to the "good sense" of the American people. Good sense is futile unless translated into action. Organized reaction must be met with organized progress. Against the Liberty League and the Sentinels of Wall Street, the American people must build the Farmer-Labor Party of workers, farmers and professionals. This is all the more necessary because Roosevelt's "liberalism" is only relative. He may try to resist the Republican reactionaries, but fascist finance-capital bears down upon him within his own party. Against the parties of capital the American people can contend only with a party of their own.

Good Neighbor Wall Street

LITTLE wonder that effusive peace talk surrounds preparations for the coming Pan-American Conference. As the fiasco of its neutrality policy becomes increasingly evident, the Roosevelt government finds itself sorely in need of something to pass off to the electorate as an achievement in the sphere of foreign policy.

The fact is that a *genuine* system of collective security in the Americas would be an important step toward the prevention of such wars as the Chaco. This

could really be achieved by extending to the western hemisphere the system of collective security against war proposed in Europe through the efforts of the Soviet Union and intended to embrace all nations which desire peace. But the State Department is more deeply concerned with furthering the aggressive ambitions of finance capital than with furthering the cause of peace. The Buenos Aires Conference may be expected to follow the general pattern of the Seventh Pan-American Conference of 1933; it

will seek to extend Wall Street's domination in Latin America by further displacing British influence. Moreover, this year "Pan-Americanism" will also be directed against Japan, which has been energetically working to secure a commercial and a strategic foothold among the Pacific Coast countries of Carribbean and South America.

Explaining President Roosevelt's disavowal of the right to single-handed intervention in Latin America, The New York Times wrote editorially, April 18:

This restatement of the Monroe Doctrine restored it to a simple declaration of opposition by the United States to the extension of European influence in the Western Hemisphere. Nothing was done, however, to "implement" this simple declaration and steps should be taken in this direction.

The Buenos Aires Conference, according to The Times, faces the task of "implementing" Roosevelt's restatement of the Monroe Doctrine. Our government, the Times adds, would "presumably welcome" the proposal put forward by Jorge Ubico, Guatemalan dictator of United Fruit Company fame, to the effect that a Pan-American League of Nations be established. The New Deal diplomats will no doubt be ready to entertain any scheme which promises to diminish British influence in Latin-American countries, particularly in Argentina and Brazil. Though Roosevelt's initial message on the Pan-American Conference spoke of "supplementing" existing world-peace machinery, it is not likely that American imperialism would view with great dismay an arrangement tending to divorce these countries from the League of Nations.

Conference preparations are being made under the aegis of the "good neighbor" policy. Washington's "good neighborliness" may be gauged when it is recalled that the present Assistant Secretary of State, Sumner Welles, personally directed the ousting of the Cuban government of Dr. Grau San Martin because of its leanings toward national independence. Shielded by "good neighbor" talk, Washington will probably try to utilize the Pan-American Conference to facilitate future interventionist moves. For obvious reasons, our imperialists would prefer armed intervention which has the appearance of collective action, to intervention in the old-fashioned Nicaraguan style. A deceptive mechanism to provide "joint consent" may therefore result from the Conference. The discussions on how armed interven-

tion should be carried through will not be based on abstract principle. The impetuous sweep of the People's Anti-Imperialist Front in Mexico, Chile, Brazil and Cuba, proves disturbing to its interests and may soon become a pretext for direct interference by United States imperialism. The same can be said of the growing force of militant labor and of the Communist Parties, so strikingly revealed in the recent Pan-American Labor Conference when a revolutionary trade unionist officially represented Chilean labor. Progressive Americans should be on the alert to defend these popular movements for national liberation from intervention in any form.

From the economic viewpoint, the reciprocal trade program of the "good neighbor" policy is bound to have a degrading effect upon Latin American countries. This is true despite recent increases in the export of raw products from some of these countries to the

United States. The lowering of tariff barriers on imports from the United States spells destruction for their fragile native industry. They are also cut off from former markets in Europe in retaliation for the unfavorable treatment of European exports to the Latin-American market. Their semi-colonial dependence upon the colossus of the north becomes ever more pronounced.

In his address on Pan-American Day, Secretary of State Hull placed great stress on the reciprocal trade program as a factor contributing to the maintenance of peace. He failed to indicate, however, that the tariff advantages granted to exports from this country to Latin America are obtained at the expense of British and other imperialist rivals. Official Pan-Americanism means an intensified drive for domination of the countries to the south and heightens the clash of interests between the imperialist powers. This is a strange way indeed of promoting peace.

Blood in Palestine

PROFOUNDLY tragic is the news this week from Palestine. Sanguinary conflict between Arabs and Jews has taken a heavy toll of victims on both sides. First, Arabs killed a Jew; then two Arabian workers were killed near Pesakh Tikvah. Violent clashes followed in which, according to official figures, 6 Jews were killed, 11 seriously wounded and 28 received lighter injuries; while 2 Arabs were killed, 1 seriously wounded and 14 received lighter injuries. These figures, issued by the British High Commissioner, show that the number of Jewish victims was the greater and that the Jewish population of Palestine is in the gravest danger. Those who fled from pogroms in Poland and Germany to seek refuge in Palestine now find themselves once more victims of a bloody terror.

Who is to blame for Palestine's tragedy? Clearly, the guilt lies with British imperialist policy based on the maxim "divide and conquer." Imperial Britain provokes national and religious clashes in its colonies. This enables it to step in as the guardian of law and order; it punishes both sides of the conflict and keeps them both under its imperial heel.

In Palestine, Britain's policy of sanguinary provocation is aided on the

one hand by Arab reactionaries, and on the other hand by certain Zionist-revisionist lackeys of British imperialism who poison the political atmosphere by a provocative "race-politics" against the poorer sections of the Arab population. The rivalry between Arab and Jewish Tories leads to street-battles in which innocent people are slaughtered.

The most urgent task of the moment in Palestine is to halt the shedding of blood. All who provoke and propagate race hatred must be sharply condemned, whether they be Jews or Arabs. The next urgent task is to alter those conditions which create conflict and bloodshed. The situation in Palestine must be drastically changed. This can be done only if Jewish and Arab workers and farmers organize unions of their own in which there is no racial discrimination of any kind. There must be a strict prohibition of the purchase of land without the farmer's consent. Race politics, which plays directly into the hands of Nazis, fascists and British imperialists, as well as into the hands of Arab reactionaries and Zionist-revisionist elements, must be halted. Palestine's tragedy can be assuaged only when the Jewish and Arabian masses form a united People's Front against British imperialism.

Who Is in Danger?

JOHN STRACHEY

LONDON.

THE QUESTION is, who is in danger? Who is in the greatest danger of a German attack, the Soviet Union or the British Empire? In this country we have all been stressing, and rightly stressing, the danger of a German attack upon the Soviet Union, which has arisen from the refusal of the British government to support the collective peace system.

That the events of the past three weeks have taken Hitler a long step down the road to freeing his hands for aggression is unquestionable. Nor is there any doubt that the British government firmly believes that that aggression, when it comes, will be directed against the Soviet Union.

And so, of course, it may be. The Soviet Union is in acute danger of attack from Germany and Japan: and it is of paramount importance that the working-class movements of the world should realize this fact and should drive their governments into support of the Soviet Union's peace policy. For such an attack on the Soviet Union would be a frightful thing. It would mean the diversion of almost all her energies from the constructive, peaceful purposes on which they are now employed to self-defense. It is a thing to prevent which we must use every ounce of our energies.

But I do not believe that the Soviet Union is now in danger of defeat, as distinct from attack. Even if the British government continues to support Hitler to the present degree, he is not likely to get his hands free, or his preparations complete for some time. His next move will no doubt be southward upon Austria and Czechoslovakia. If the British government allows him to destroy these states, in a year, or in two years, or in three years—one cannot tell when—he will reach a position in which he can attack either eastwards or westwards.

Now Hitler and his backers are not moved by the emotion of gratitude. As soon as they feel that their time has come to make their bid for world power or go under, they will look round the world quite impartially to see which of the major powers presents them with the opportunity of the easiest victory.

Apparently it has never occurred to Lords Monsell and Hailsham, and the other 100-per-cent backers of Hitler in the British Cabinet, that when that moment comes, the British Empire may seem to Germany a richer prize and a less formidable enemy than the Soviet Union.

The Soviet Union is, after all, a compact, united people of nearly 170 millions. It will soon possess a power of defense second to none. Its steadfast peace policy and support of the collective system is earning it the



trust and confidence of the menaced states of Europe. It may well be that when the decisive hour strikes, the Soviet Union will find herself closely supported by the French and Spanish peoples, who are both on the road to forcing their governments to give this support.

But what will be the position of Britain in that same hour if the present government remains in power and continues to act as Hitler's broker? With every week that passes the policy of the present British government is making this country the most hated and distrusted state in all Europe. Already every other member of the League knows that whoever else they can depend on, they cannot depend on the good faith of Britain. A year or so more of such a policy and Britain will certainly have achieved that isolation which Lord Beaverbrook demands. But the consequences will be extremely different from what his Lordship expects.

It does not seem to me by any means a fantastic speculation that in these circumstances Hitler will suddenly switch around his whole foreign policy, will call a truce in his struggle with the Soviet Union and France, and will confront an isolated Britain with demands that means surrender to him, or a war in which Britain will stand alone. Such a war would almost certainly mean the destruction of the British Empire. It may well be said that this is the affair of the British governing class; that if their policy wrecks their empire it is no concern of the British workers, who would indeed achieve their liberation by this very fact. That is perfectly true, but at the same time we in Britain cannot remain indifferent to the present policy of our rulers. A German fascist assault upon an isolated Britain would not only wreck the British Empire; it would also almost certainly lead to the destruction of a large section of the British people.

It would lead to a world-wide war, at the end of which workers' states would certainly arise in many parts of the world. But during the course of that war many millions of us would perish. Fortunately, there is an incomparably better and less violent road to the spread of Socialism throughout the world than this.

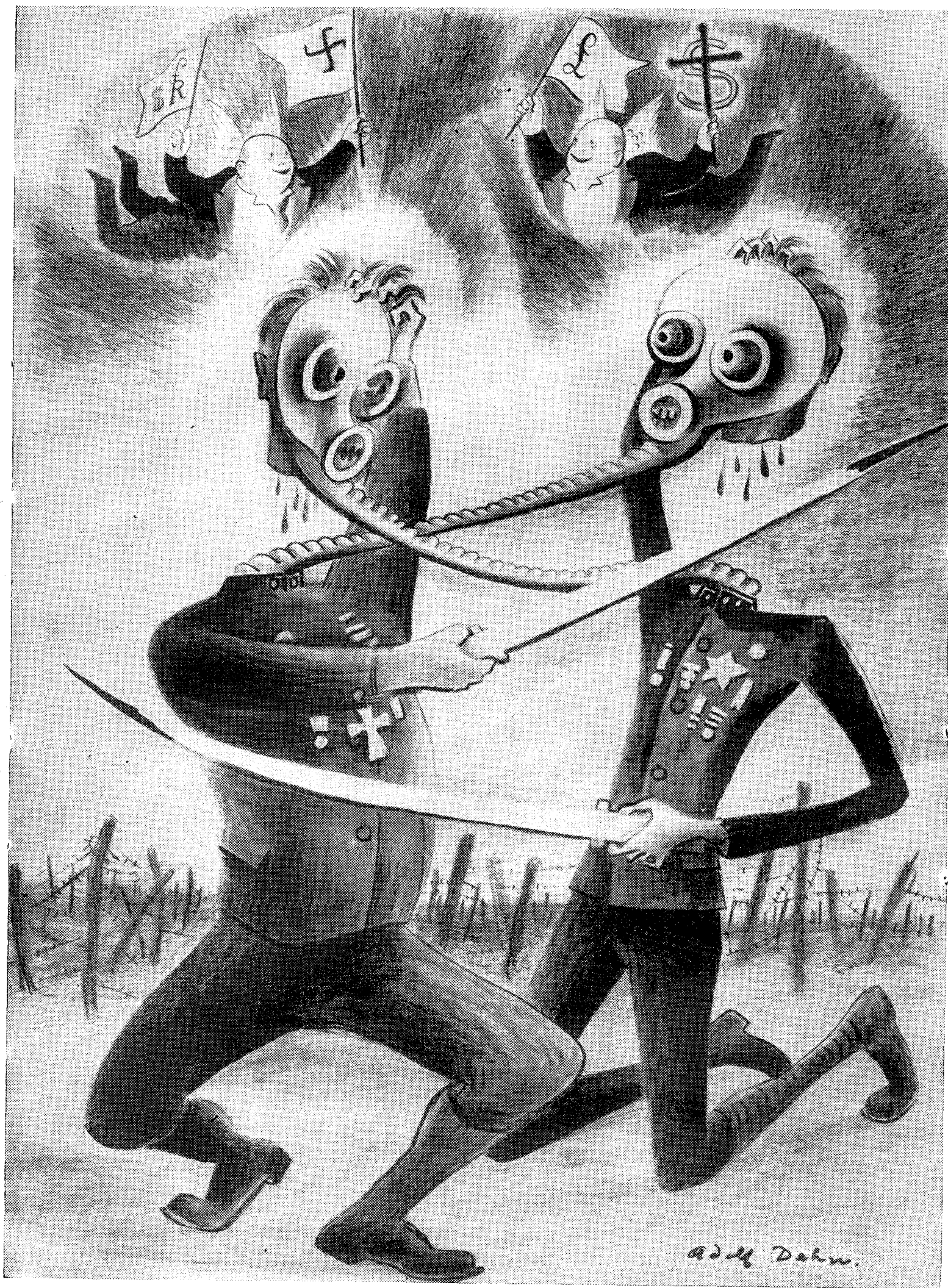
It is for the British people to force their government into adherence to the collective peace system, to adherence to the Franco-Soviet Pact, or to the negotiation of a parallel peace pact of mutual assistance between the Soviet Union and Britain. If this is done, the way of fascist aggression will be barred and peace will be maintained. During that peace the workers will get power in much of Europe, including, we trust, Germany herself. They cannot, of course, overthrow the fascist regimes without violence, but that inner violence will be but a drop in the ocean compared to the violence of world war, to which it is the alternative.

This is the road along which the people of Britain must force their government to travel, as they value their lives. Already the more far-seeing members of the British governing class realize that support of Hitler, even from their point of view, is a reckless gamble in which they are almost certain to be destroyed.

If the strength of the labor movement is thrown in favor of a collective system, if even at this late hour, the organs of Labor and Liberal opinion such as *The Daily Herald* and *New Chronicle* which has up till now supported Hitler, recover their sanity, and support the cause of peace, war can be prevented.

As I write, the terms of the new French proposals have not been published, but they are said to amount to a return to the scheme put forward in 1924 by the French and the first British Labor government, under the name of the Geneva protocol. In the totally new circumstances today it may be that this scheme would form a useful basis for the building up of the collective peace system. And it may yet be that the combined forces of that section of the British governing class which is not so intoxicated by its fascist sympathies that it is willing to endanger its whole existence for the sake of Hitler, plus the popular forces, which are determined to fight for peace, can force the British government into a collective system. Or again they may be able to drive this already weakening government out of office.

One thing at any rate is certain; namely that the present policy of the British government is Hitler's own prop and stay, and that it leads straight to world-wide catastrophe.



FOR WHOM?

(American Artists Congress Exhibition: War and Fascism)

Are Teachers Seditious?

CONGRESSMAN BYRON N. SCOTT

Byron Scott, former Long Beach school teacher, now member of the House of Representatives from the State of California, has fought in Congress against attempts to destroy civil rights.—THE EDITORS.

WASHINGTON.

UNTIL recently, it has been my policy to ignore senseless attempts of jingoistic patriots to secure patriotism by requiring an oath from school-teachers. Obviously, the drive to make such oaths obligatory has been conducted by groups interested in creating a Red scare during 1935 and 1936. But I have trusted in the good sense of those in a position to do so to keep such legislation off the floor of the House of Representatives. So far, these men have done so in a highly commendable manner. The American people owe a debt of gratitude to those few men who have been instrumental in keeping the two best-known and most objectionable bills, the Russell-Kramer anti-sedition and the Tydings-McCormack military disaffection bills, off the floor of the House.

I should prefer to ignore proposed legislation of this kind, so long as it seems to be the senseless and futile antic of short-sighted jingoes. But there are reasons why such bills can no longer be ignored. They have been approved by the Senate and now a determined effort is being made to push them through the House. They are no longer, it seems to me, senseless gestures, but rather very serious attempts by reactionary groups to curtail the civil liberties of the American people. The Tydings-McCormack bill would make it a crime to criticize militarism; the Russell-Kramer bill, under the guise of eliminating the alleged menace of Communism, would penalize citizens who expressed any opinion distasteful to the extreme union-hating reaction.

The military disaffection bill was introduced into the Senate by Senator Tydings of Maryland at the request of the Navy Department. Later, when Secretary of War Dern stated that he was not "particularly in favor of the bill," Senator Tydings withdrew his sponsorship. Nevertheless, the Tydings-McCormack bill stands officially approved by the Senate. In the House, half-a-dozen Congressmen have succeeded in knocking the Russell-Kramer bill off the unanimous consent calendar.

These bills are apparently part of some kind of general campaign for legislation of this type. At the last session of Congress, an anti-Communist rider was attached to the District of Columbia appropriation bill. At that time, school teachers and administrators in Washington's public-school system went on record opposing the existing ban

on all mention of Communism or Soviet Russia in local schools. They adopted a resolution which read, in part:

We believe the teacher must be left free to consider all existing forms of government in order properly to give to the American child an understanding and love for our own. We feel, therefore, that certain restrictions now being advocated dangerously encroach upon the rights of free men and women guaranteed by our Constitution. We believe the present oath of allegiance to the Constitution of the United States is sufficient to insure the above and provide an adequate basis for prosecution in case of violation.

I do not blame those 1,400 teachers for protesting against the restrictions imposed upon them. I protest, too. That was why I introduced an amendment to the Interior Department bill prohibiting the teaching of the legislative program of the American Liberty League. I did that more or less in a spirit of jest, but I was serious, too. I wanted certain members of the House of Representatives to realize how close they come to making themselves ridiculous in the eyes of intelligent people when they pass legislation like the anti-Communist rider to the District appropriation bill.

I have a profound and deep-seated respect and admiration for the teaching profession, of which I was a member until recently. This woefully underpaid, overworked, much-maligned group of men and women who have suffered so much from the malicious attacks of William Randolph Hearst and his sycophants, both paid and unpaid, has done more, to my way of thinking, to build up the proper concepts of citizenship than the pseudo-patriots will ever be able to tear down. I have never seen a more loyal group, a more patriotic group, a more American group in my life than the American school teachers. I think we would do a great deal better to praise the school teacher than to pay lip service to him, or play directly into the hands of what I consider the greatest menace to democracy and liberty in this country — William Randolph Hearst. Members of the House of Representatives would do better to pay their respects and gratitude to a loyal, law-abiding group like the American school teachers than to play into the hands of that fermenter of fetid fiction, William Randolph Hearst. Whenever a Congressman gets up on the floor of the House and speaks in favor of repressive legislation, he aids and abets that neo-fascist champion. Hearst is the outstanding exponent of all this restrictive legislation; his papers are full of it all the time. Professor Ross of the University of Wisconsin has said that it might be a good idea to get a committee together to investigate the activities of Mr. Hearst, to investigate his news-

papers and the purposes behind all his propaganda. I think that is a very timely suggestion.

The fact that the anti-Communist rider to the District of Columbia appropriation bill "got by" the House of Representatives and the Senate must warn us that in the future we must be eternally vigilant. I do not intend to sit idly by and see a sixteenth-century censorship placed upon the happenings of the present day.

THE District of Columbia oath is not the only sign of danger to freedom of thought and expression. There is a movement in many states to require teachers to take an oath of allegiance to support the Constitution. I took one when I started to teach school ten years ago. The implications were not so serious then. But that was before Mr. Hearst started his Red scare, 1935-36 edition. There is a different motive behind the oath today than there was when I took it. Then I think it was a matter of form. Today it is an instrument of reactionary persecution—persecution of American citizens at the instigation of William Randolph Hearst who never acted under the stimulus of a decent motive in his life.

Can you make a man a patriot by forcing him to sign an oath? Can you assuage the pains of an empty stomach by making the sufferer salute the flag? Can you make a school child understand why he does not have any breakfast, why he has to be hungry, why he has not decent clothes, why his father has no job, why his mother cries continually, why he is cold—can you do all this by making the child salute and pledge allegiance to a flag? Yet children have actually been expelled from the schools because they have refused to salute or pledge allegiance.

I wonder how many people realize how far this legislation demanding oaths from teachers can be carried. A teacher in a small North Carolina school had to sign the following contract before she could get a teaching job in that town:

I promise to take a vital interest in all phases of Sunday-school work, donating all my time, service, and money without stint for the benefit and uplift of the community. I promise to abstain from all dancing, immodest dressing, and any other conduct unbecoming a teacher and a lady. I promise not to go out with any young man except in so far as it may be necessary to stimulate Sunday-school work. I promise not to fall in love, to become engaged, or secretly married.

I promise to remain in the dormitory or on the school grounds when not actively engaged in school or church or elsewhere. I promise not to encourage or tolerate the least familiarity on the part of any of my boy pupils. I promise to

sleep at least eight hours each night, to eat carefully, to take every precaution to keep in the best of health and spirits in order that I may be better able to render efficient service to my pupils. I promise to remember that I owe a duty to the townspeople who are paying me my wages; that I owe respect to the school board and to the superintendent who hired me; and that I shall consider myself at all times the willing servant of the school board and the townspeople and that I shall cooperate with them to the limit of my ability in any movement aimed at the betterment of the town, the pupils, or the school.

I was tempted recently to introduce this teacher's pledge as a rider the next time the District of Columbia bill came up, so as to make this kind of legislation utterly ridiculous. How far can the jingoes go in inspiring patriotism by forcing our teachers to take oaths? *This persecution by oaths must stop.* This nascent Nazism must stop. Congress must not become a party to it. Almost every day, the Hearst papers carry flaming editorials urging repressive legislation. When Hearst favors legislation of this kind, every decent citizen of principle, every

Congressman, every Senator should be against it.

But the Senate has already passed the Tydings-McCormack "military disaffection bill." And the Hearst forces are making the most strenuous efforts to push through the Russell-Kramer "sedition" bill. Although a handful of us in the House of Representatives have succeeded in knocking both these bills off the consent calendar, we are under no illusions as to what is needed to prevent them from being enacted under pressure from reactionary businessmen and financiers. Only consistent and concerted pressure from the home districts of the Senators and Congressmen will prevent Hearst, the Chamber of Commerce, the National Association of Manufacturers and the military clique from getting special legislative consideration for these bills, or from rushing them through in the hasty confusion which often attends the last days of a congressional session.

I have received literally thousands of cards, letters and telegrams urging me:

please do not favor the Tydings-McCormack bill; please do not favor the Russell-Kramer bill. I know many of the signers of these pleas personally. They are Americans, they are patriots, and they are jealously protecting their constitutional rights to free speech. And I share their sentiments. I do not favor the Tydings-McCormack bill; I do not favor the Russell-Kramer bill. I do not favor any legislation of this kind. People still suffer from the depression and no one must deny them the right to say so, publicly or privately; no one must deny them their right to publish their complaints. If we would improve conditions, such sharp criticism would cease; but you cannot beat or legislate discontent out of people. Put a plug in the spout of a tea-kettle and it will blow the top off. Is ours a good government? If it is, it will not be changed by the people. If it is not a good government, we should make it so. Let us stop these Tydings-McCormack and Russell-Kramer bills and let us rather turn our attention to improving living conditions in this country.

How Wilson Fought Lenin

JOSEPH FREEMAN

WASHINGTON.

HISTORY, Napoleon observed, is a pack of lies generally agreed upon. This is certainly true of the history of the exploiting classes, to whom falsehood is an indispensable political instrument. But if you wait long enough, there comes that now when it can be told; the governing class itself, for one reason or another, reveals part of the truth.

Recently the Munitions Committee headed by Senator Nye exposed the real nature of the "neutrality" policy pursued by the Wilson administration from the beginning of the World War. That policy, emanating from J. P. Morgan and Company and carried out by President Wilson and Secretary of State Lansing, was to interpret "neutrality" wholly in favor of American bankers and their Allied customers. Now the State Department reveals that during 1919 and 1920, when the Wilson administration talked loftily about non-intervention in Russian affairs, it actually aided the White Guard armies which were seeking to destroy the newly-established Soviet regime.

The State Department has just released to the public the third and final volume of *Foreign Relations* for the year 1920. These diplomatic papers, now published for the first time, reveal that the Wilson administration was actively engaged in encouraging Admiral Kolchak, General Denikin and General Wrangel, military leaders of the counter-revolution. The official documents leave no doubt on this point. On November 19, 1919,

for example, Secretary of State Lansing wired to Ambassador Morris in Tokyo:

It is highly desirable that Kolchak remain as head of the Siberian government. His presence will give continuity to our policy. . . . I desire you to discuss with the Japanese authorities the grave situation which has arisen in Siberia, and to make it clear to them that the United States would welcome a solution by which Kolchak would remain at the head of the Siberian government.

This policy of supporting Kolchak was abandoned only when he had failed to crush the Bolshevik revolution. From that point on, the Japanese supported the monstrous Semenov in Siberia. Here the State Department documents just released wholly support the revelation made by General Graves in his autobiography. Kolchak's failure, however, did not dim the State Department's hope in the ultimate triumph of the counter-revolution. Its policy toward the Soviet regime was outlined in a memorandum which Secretary Lansing submitted to President Wilson on December 3, 1919. Lansing opposed the restoration of the feudal-czarist regime in Russia, but he opposed even more strongly the working-class state seeking to establish a socialist society. Anxious to have Russia become a bourgeois-capitalist state, Lansing reported to the President that

it was impossible to attain the ends desired by dealing with the so-called Bolshevik group. [He was happy to add, however, that] written assurance was obtained through Admiral Kolchak and his associates that the coordinated anti-Bolshevik movement would direct their efforts,

if they succeeded in driving the Bolsheviki from Moscow and Petrograd, to the democratic rehabilitation of the Russian state.

Lansing's memorandum shows that the aid which the Wilson administration gave to the counter-revolutionaries was of a practical nature. American experts assisted in the operation of the Trans-Siberian and Chinese Eastern railways, cooperating with Japan; 9,000 United States troops were maintained in Siberia; and Lansing worked out a scheme for relief in the areas controlled by the White Guards. The last measure was political in aim. "The humanitarian appeal is strong," Lansing explained, "and it is felt that relief of the popular distress would be one of the surest ways of fostering domestic peace and *rational government*.¹"

The Secretary's prejudices in regard to Russia emerge with striking clarity from his memorandum. For the leaders of the counter-revolution he had the greatest sympathy and admiration. He lamented the "difficulties besetting the leaders of the anti-Bolshevik forces"; he lauded "the courage and steadfastness with which these leaders have met the obstacles in their path." His hero was Admiral Kolchak; his villain, Lenin. Violent hatred blinded the Secretary's political vision. "I am confident," he assured Wilson, "that *the cynical and unmoral opportunism of Lenin and his followers will not in the end prevail*."

History proved Lansing to be a poor

¹ All italics in this article are mine.—J. F.

prophet, but his memo to Wilson rested not upon faith alone. The Secretary of State believed in works, too. He thought it lay within the right, interest and duty of the United States and other enlightened nations of the earth "to encourage by all available means the creation of a situation favorable to the rapid movement of events . . . toward the establishment of a Russian government resting on the collective will of the Russian people." The last pseudo-democratic phrase meant a capitalist government.

But the Soviet regime was not easily to be disposed of. Describing its strength, Lansing said that "against this machine it may be that only force will prevail." But Bolshevism was gaining in popularity and something more than force was required to halt it. Hence Lansing urged Wilson:

While recognizing the practical necessity, in certain contingencies, of supporting with military supplies the forces which seek to oust the Bolsheviks from the seat of government, I desire to emphasize above all the vital need for relieving as soon as possible the economic distress which foments and perpetuates the popular state of mind called Bolshevism.

The Secretary of State wanted to aid the Russian people economically only to the extent that such aid would destroy the Soviet Republic. He was operating on his principle that Bolshevism was "preeminently an economic and moral phenomenon against which economic and moral remedies alone will prevail." He therefore proposed relief in distressed areas as a political weapon. But he went even further and suggested more permanent economic activity for the purpose of fighting the Soviet regime. The Bolsheviks, he said,

challenge us to the defense of our national well-being and institutions, and I earnestly hope that we will reply by carrying into their immediate field of activity, in the greatest measure practicable, a contest of economic reorganization.

On the same day on which he submitted his memorandum on Russia to President Wilson—December 3, 1919—Secretary Lansing cabled to Admiral McCully in Paris, appointing him a special agent of the State Department and directing him to go to the south of Russia. McCully was ordered "to establish informal contact with General Denikin and his associates." He was to report to the State Department on the "social and political character of the anti-Bolshevik movement headed by General Denikin" and the likelihood "of its ever becoming a means by which orderly constitutional government may be established in Russia." The Secretary of State explained to Admiral McCully the meaning of his mission. He wired:

Information on these points is of especial importance since the defeat of Admiral Kolchak in Siberia and the shifting of the center of gravity of the non-Bolshevik elements from that region to the south of Russia.

These diplomatic circumlocutions become all the more significant when it is remembered that in this period the State Depart-

ment refused to consider Soviet recognition or to enter into discussions with Ludwig Martens, official Soviet representative in the United States. Martens was unceremoniously deported from this country; but to south Russia, then controlled by General Denikin, the State Department sent Evan Young as Consul General in Odessa with authority to station vice-consuls in other sections of the Denikin area. On December 19, 1919, Lansing wired McCully that the "*War Department has sent two military observers to South Russia, Colonels Castle and Cox.*" While these measures were being taken with all the requisite diplomatic informality, Lansing instructed the American embassy in Paris to "make arrangements for McCully and Sazonov to meet." Sazonov was Director of Foreign Affairs for General Denikin's army.

But General Denikin was no more successful than Admiral Kolchak. From Constantinople, the American High Commissioner Bristol reported to the State Department on January 2, 1920 that "opinion in responsible quarters here forecasts ultimate triumph of Bolsheviks and the powerful spread of their ideas throughout the world." But the interventionists did not abandon all hope. On January 26, 1920, Admiral McCully cabled the State Department:

There is at this moment a splendid opportunity for political regeneration of Denikin government and formation of nucleus anti-Bolshevik government organization. . . . If the matter is of sufficient importance to our Government, I would suggest for its consideration that representations be made to Denikin urging him to make liberal concessions with a statement that if such concessions were made they would be regarded as sufficient grounds for the United States Government seriously to consider recognition of his Government as de facto government of Russia.

But by February General Denikin was out of the picture. The Bolsheviks captured Odessa, and the Red Commander, the twenty-year-old Uborevitch, asked the American officer who interviewed him why the British warships in the harbor had fired on his troops. Admiral McCully then wired the State Department that there had been corruption in Denikin's army; but "the Red forces show restraint and a desire to maintain order." Still the British and French warships in the waters around Novorossisk fired in the direction of the Bolshevik troops enveloping the city.

From Kolchak, the State Department had turned to Denikin. Now it turned to General Wrangel, who succeeded him as chieftain of the White armies in southern Russia. Again the enemies of the workers' state were endowed with the loftiest qualities. On April 24, 1920, McCully wired the State Department that Wrangel was "entitled to confidence" and that "his purpose is sincere." It was Lenin who was "cynical and unmoral." Nevertheless, after observing the Bolsheviks for several days in Odessa, McCully wired on April 29:

The Bolsheviks have also undoubtedly progressed. . . . Particularly their attention to education and care of children indicate a spiritual advancement not yet reached in their conservative opponents. They have also done much to promote advance of individual political rights.

The Admiral objected to the alleged methods by which the Bolsheviks accomplished these ends; but he realized that "foreign intervention in Russian affairs has accomplished nothing useful either for the Russian or for the Powers intervening." He warned the State Department that Russia would "remain a great and formidable nation not dominated by other powers whatsoever." Russia would become a power, he concluded, "whose good will will be invaluable and with whom it would be wise to be friends." But Russian policy was being shaped by the State Department, and the new White hope was General Wrangel. Admiral McCully therefore cabled on June 6, 1920 that Wrangel's basic difficulties were financial. If economic and financial conditions could be ameliorated, "the Crimea could be held indefinitely and form the point from which a decisive blow could be struck at Soviet rule." Admiral McCully discussed the military features of his message "with United States military observer who is in agreement."

The Russian policy of the Wilson administration during 1919-20 was thus based on the definite aim of rendering economic, political and military assistance to the counter-revolution. This fact has been known in a general way for some time, but this is the first time that American state papers actually substantiate it. We now learn officially that State Department policy on Soviet recognition and the liberation of the oppressed nationalities was influenced by Bakhmetiev, who continued to be recognized as representative of the defunct Kerensky regime. The Whites, hoping for eventual victory, wanted to keep most of the old empire intact, and sought Allied aid to block the Soviet policy of freeing the national minorities. This monarchist and White Guard view was incorporated in the note of August 10, 1920, which Secretary of State Bainbridge Colby sent to the Italian embassy in Washington, explaining the State Department's Russian policy. The note was so full of violent slander of the Soviet regime, that Peter Struve, once a "legal" Marxist, now Foreign Minister for General Wrangel, cabled to the State Department on August 21 that Wrangel and his White government "have learned with great satisfaction of the views of the United States Government relative to Russia."

Through Ludwig Martens, the Soviet Commissar of Foreign Affairs, Chicherin wired on October 4, 1920 to the Italian embassy here a detailed reply to Colby's "malicious accusations."

The condition precedent for Mr. Colby's friendship towards Russia is that her government should not be a Soviet government. As a matter of fact, any other Government at present

would be a bourgeois or capitalist government, which, in view of the present economic unity of the world, would mean a government identified with the interests of the world's dominating financial groups. The most powerful among the latter, as a consequence of the world war, are the North American financial groups. The condition upon which Mr. Colby would extend American friendship to Russia is therefore that her regime should be such as to permit of the domination of the American financial groups in Russia.

On the question of Russia's territorial integrity, Chicherin pointed out, there were three major policies. The interests which Colby represented wanted to maintain the inviolability of czarist territory in order to establish upon that territory the domination of foreign financial interests. For this purpose, Colby distinguished between Poland, Finland and Armenia which he thought were entitled to national liberation because they had been annexed by force, and other national minorities which he thought belonged to an inviolable Russia. Chicherin, ridiculing this "discrimination," pointed out that Georgia, Azerbaidjan, Lithuania, Latvia, Esthonia and the Ukraine had also been annexed by force. The second policy, followed more successfully by Britain, was to establish the domination of foreign financial interests in the new bourgeois border-states separated from the former Russian empire. The third policy was that of Soviet Russia, which Chicherin formulated as follows in his note of October 10:

—the policy of complete abolition of the exploitation of the workers by the former owners of the means of production, which is the basis of the Soviet system. The Soviet Government unwaveringly upholds the right of national self-determination of the working-people of every nationality, including the right of secession and of forming separate states. This is the cornerstone on which it wishes to establish friendly relations with the new border states.

Chicherin then proceeded to demolish Colby's argument that the Soviet government could not be recognized because it did not keep its agreements with other nations, and would therefore not keep any pledge to abstain from propaganda. Even the Brest-Litovsk Treaty, imposed upon Russia by violence, was faithfully observed by the Soviet Government, Chicherin said.

If the Russian Government binds itself to abstain from spreading Communist literature, all its representatives abroad are enjoined scrupulously to observe this pledge. The Soviet Government clearly understands that the revolutionary movement of the working masses in every country is their own affair. It holds to the principle that communism cannot be imposed by force but that the fight for communism in every country must be carried on by its working masses themselves. Seeing that in America and in many other countries the workers have not conquered the powers of government, and are not even convinced of the necessity of their conquest, the Russian Soviet Government deems it necessary to establish and faithfully to maintain peaceable and friendly relations with the existing governments of those countries.

This message, sent by Chicherin sixteen years ago, shows a continuity in Soviet for-



"Don't be a softie, Thorndyke—*c'est la guerre*, you know."

Aime Gawwin

eign policy; it should destroy forever the canard that former Soviet principles have been abandoned in recent years. In Lenin's lifetime the Soviet Government announced a position to which Maxim Litvinov adhered in his negotiations for American recognition in 1933, and which Stalin reiterated recently in the interview with Roy Howard.

From the beginning, the Soviet government has scrupulously kept all its pledges. It has never interfered in the internal affairs of other countries. But other countries have interfered in its affairs; and the State Department papers published for the first time this week reveal that the intervention on behalf of Kolchak, Denikin and Wrangel was of the most active nature. This aid to the counter-revolution was rendered up to the last moment. As late as the fall of 1920, when Wrangel was sustaining one military defeat after another, Admiral McCully proposed to the State Department an armistice permitting the White chieftain to retain control of the territory then under his waning control. And the State Department initiated a long discussion with Wrangel which indicated a desire to recognize him if politically feasible. But Wrangel was finally smashed, as were Kolchak and Denikin before him; the Red Army, supported by the mass of Russian workers and peasants, settled the problem of intervention.

As one reads the state papers of that period, one is impressed by the vision of the Bolshevik leaders. Chicherin's note of October 4 was directed against Bainbridge Colby. Chicherin knew that in America there was a profound division of opinion in regard to Soviet Russia. He argued that the elemen-

tary economic needs of the peoples of Russia and other countries demanded a normal exchange of goods between them. The first condition of such relations was "mutual good faith and non-intervention on both parts." The Soviet Government was convinced that not only the working masses "but also the farsighted businessmen of the United States" would repudiate the policy expressed in Colby's note, and that normal relations would be established between the two countries.

Chicherin's prediction came true in 1933. The "farsighted businessmen" prevailed, and the United States recognized the Soviet Government. But the interests represented by Bainbridge Colby are not idle even today. Colby himself is closely allied with William Randolph Hearst; he is a frequent contributor to the Hearst papers which carry on a persistent anti-Soviet campaign whose object can only be a rupture of relations. However, the documents now published by the State Department should contribute to a better grasp of American-Soviet relations, and strengthen those millions of Americans who understand why the errors of Lansing and Colby must not be repeated, above all at this critical juncture in world affairs.

Time has vindicated the socialist republic wholly. As the U.S.S.R. advances to unprecedented achievements, it becomes certain that no greater calamity could have befallen Russia or the world than the triumph of the Kolchaks, Denikins, Wrangels. Today even greater danger lies in those sinister forces, west and east, which, seeking to destroy and dismember the Soviet Union, would plunge mankind into war.

Accent on Youth

GIL GREEN

WHEN a man with the shrewd political acumen of President Roosevelt addresses his first campaign speech to the young men and young women of the nation, there must be a good reason for it. Nor is that reason one of mere sentimental concern for the welfare of the younger generation.

The President delivered his address on Monday evening. Tuesday morning, Postmaster-General Farley, with due slyness and ceremony, announced the launching of a "Roosevelt First Voters League, which aims to win 5,000,000 of the 9,000,000 who, it is estimated, have come to age since the last Presidential election." According to Mr. Best, one leader of the new organization, 1,000 local chapters are planned throughout the country, since "young people are bound to do their bit for President Roosevelt in November because of the many things he has done for them."

Not to be outdone by the New Deal camp, the Republican Party is launching a counter-offensive of its own. Hoover has issued a statement to the Young Republicans in answer to Roosevelt's speech. Paul Block, wealthy publisher, rushed into print with a long editorial attack on Roosevelt, entitled, "The Youth of America Will Decide Next Election."

Why this sudden accent on youth? It cannot be explained exclusively by the large number of first voters. There has been no such shift in the age composition of the nation as to warrant a belief that the percentage of eligible first voters this year will be appreciably greater than in 1932. The appeal to youth is due to something else: For the first time in its history this country is confronted with a youth problem of no mean proportions and a militant youth movement of growing import.

That Roosevelt understands the nature of this problem is shown by his Baltimore address. Speaking to youth, he said:

You have felt the rough hand of the depression. You have walked the streets looking for jobs that never turned up. Out of this has come physical hardship and, more serious, the scars of disillusionment.

Roosevelt knows that, according to the estimates of his own administration, from five to eight million young people are out of school and out of work. The youth problem of today is the problem of a *surplus generation*.

In 1932 there was also a large number of young unemployed. But something has changed since then. Three years ago the country was in the throes of its worst economic crisis. Production was still plunging downward at headlong speed. The plight

of youth was certainly great, but was looked upon as a temporary one. With Roosevelt would come recovery, with recovery would come employment, and with employment would come prosperity and renewed opportunity for youth. This is what a majority of the people thought.

Today, industrial recovery is an established fact. According to the latest Times index of business activity, production stands at 98.7 of the estimated normal. Yet, despite this fact, *unemployment is as great as ever and unemployment among young people greater than ever*. Thus, large masses of youth are beginning to realize that their problem is a special one of a permanent nature, that so-called prosperity is not returning and whatever little opportunity there existed in the period of a rising and expanding capitalism has completely vanished in the period of decline.

This has resulted in the birth of a militant youth movement such as this country has never before witnessed. The American Youth Congress unites scores of important youth organizations behind a progressive program. The American Student Union has become the organized expression of the progressive and radical student body. America's youth refuses to take it lying down.

Anxious to corral the growing discontent of the youth back into New Deal channels, Roosevelt in his Baltimore speech did his best to play up to the youth and to their militant sentiments. He said:

The temper of our youth has become more restless, more critical, more challenging. Flaming youth has become a flaming question. And youth comes to us wanting to know what we propose to do about a society that hurts so many of them.

But that is not all. Roosevelt wants to convey the impression that he sympathizes with the restlessness of youth.

There is much to justify the inquiring attitude of youth. You have a right to ask these questions—practical questions.

Here Roosevelt goes back to his old tricks. With a few high-sounding phrases he places himself on the side of inquiring youth. He conveniently forgets that the "practical questions" which young people ask are first of all directed to *him and his administration*.

"No man who seeks to evade or to avoid deserves your confidence," said Roosevelt, and then proceeded to evade and avoid. When speaking of raising the school-leaving age, why did not Roosevelt say something about the child-labor amendment which has been buried all these years, especially in the Southern states controlled by the Democratic Party? When speaking of the responsibility of the federal government in aiding the

youth, why did he not speak about the inadequate National Youth Administration program and of what he intends to do on June 30 when the N.Y.A. expires? Why did he not say something about the American Youth Act (Benson-Amlie Bill) which is supported by the largest and most important organizations of American youth and which alone aims at providing jobs and educational facilities for young people?

It is true that the Baltimore speech was most vehemently attacked by the Liberty-Leaguers. This, however, does not change the character of the speech itself. Roosevelt's Right opponents fear that his beautiful, alluring demagoguery may become a double-edged sword. Roosevelt tells youth they should be critical, that the federal government has a responsibility towards them, that they should nurture their dreams of a more just social order. Today these phrases may temporarily sway masses of youth to Roosevelt. But what of tomorrow? These same young people will more and more insist upon their birthright, will demand the realization of their dreams.

Paul Block in his editorial attack on the Roosevelt speech tells youth: "Every young man and young woman coming out of school or college, knows there can be no jobs unless business is making some profit." In this manner he tries to deny that which can be proven by facts and figures, namely that business profits have grown by leaps and bounds and that in the past year, alone, profits increased by 40 percent. He makes a big issue over the need for balancing the budget and attacks increased government expenditures. But what Paul Block fails to tell youth is that the budget can easily be balanced by increased taxation of corporate wealth and profits.

The concerted drive of both capitalist parties to win the youth represents more than an election struggle between these parties. American capitalism is becoming alarmed over the growing movement of youth. They fear that the seven to nine million first voters may in large numbers turn from the old parties and join forces with labor in the creation of an anti-capitalist farmer-labor party. They realize that this would only be a first step in the direction of revolutionary struggle for socialism.

Declining American capitalism cannot show youth a way out of its blind alley. Neither will the Democratic nor the Republican Parties be able to stem the rapidly growing movement of youth towards militant united action, especially in behalf of the American Youth Act. Roosevelt may try to dodge the "practical questions" today, but they will confront him at every turn, for the depression generation has come of age.

Satevepost and Revolution

New Escapes from the Soviets

MICHAEL GOLD

ONE feels a little silly posing as a Paul Revere; and yet, ladies of the D.A.R., it is necessary to warn you that the Redcoats have again arrived to ravage our coasts. They have captured The Saturday Evening Post. Yes, I mean the magazine published by George Horace Lorimer in Philadelphia. Examine the issue of April 11 last and you will find a story, titled "Escape From the Mine," by Walter D. Edmonds. In this story the hero is a Tory and the villains are your saintly ancestors, the founding fathers.

It is a worse horror story than Tatiana's *Escape from the Soviets*, though strangely resembling that famous fiction of today. Sixty feet underground, in an old abandoned mine where water drips down the rock and forms in scummy pools, the revolutionary barbarians have flung a group of "innocent" Tories. Most of these Tories were poor men, says the author, arrested not for any overt act, but because of the widespread fear under which the republic had been placed by dictators like George Washington.

One prisoner was a minister who had merely "preached for the maintenance of established government and deplored the action of such hotheaded people as General Washington."

Another man was a New York farmer "who had tried to protect his wife and daughter from being molested by New England militia," revolutionary ruffians and rapists, undoubtedly. John Wolff, hero of the tale, had done nothing worse than to give food to some hungry "refugee loyalists."

The guards hate these prisoners, feed them nothing and delight to curse and taunt them. Once a founding father of a prison guard got drunk and opened the trap door to fire his musket again and again into the prisoners. He killed one man, and had the others flogged mercilessly. One prisoner was hung by his heels for an hour and a half by brutal "Bolshevik" soldiers of George Washington.

The hero finally escapes the madhouse and after incredible hardships, makes his way to Canada and freedom. But here he learns that his little country store has been burned down by the rebels and his wife probably raped and kidnaped. So he joins a band of outraged Tories being organized to fight the rebels.

Ladies, I want to warn you that this is a skilfully written piece of propaganda, worthy of the White Guard emigré of today. It makes one's blood boil against the followers of George Washington. Several million

clerks, bond salesmen, rubber-goods merchants and Liberty League magnates read The Saturday Evening Post. Such writing, if continued, may inflame them to the point of an armed plot to return the United States to Edward VIII. What will happen to you then, O stately Daughters of the American Revolution? These S.E.P. Tories will surely have your gore, for ladies, you have made yourselves notorious as agitators and "patriots."

Now it is true that many brutalities were visited upon the Tories by the desperate and ragged patriots of 1776. This was in the first and more chaotic period of the revolution, before the various state governments had been organized to administer formal justice. But Mr. Edmonds does not give all the reasons why the Tories were persecuted by an alarmed population. Was not every Tory a scab, a spy and a potential armed enemy of the weak young Republic? If scabs and Tories multiply and are not checked, the strike or the revolution is soon lost. The patriots, however crudely, did what needed to be done to establish a republic.

But why, at this late date, must one argue all over again the justice or validity of the American Revolution of 1776? A revolution is indivisible; you cannot have its fruits unless you also accept its discomforts and difficulties. Americans generally have been proud of the revolution that permitted the Eagle to spread its wings from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

Does George Horace Lorimer choose this moment to vilify George Washington because he fears that a new revolution is in the air and it is necessary to slander every variety of revolution, even a bourgeois one like the uprising of '76?

Such distortion of the nation's history has long been a tactic of the fascist-royalists of France. For several generations they have been writing books and fiery manifestoes in which Danton is named a common thief, Robespierre a pathological murderer and the great French Revolution of 1789 a plot by a few thousand pirates against the true interests of the nation. For them the revolution is a gigantic crime that must be rectified.

They delight in uncovering all the petty filth that accompanies any great movement of the masses and using it as an argument against democracy.

But this is a new tactic for the United States. In the past few years, for example, we have had a number of books written by serious intellectuals to glorify the southern

case for Negro slavery. *So Red the Rose*, by that self-conscious "aristocrat" and admirer of Mussolini, Stark Young, is a popular example of this new yearning for a return to feudalism. *I'll Take My Stand*, a symposium by a group of Southern intellectuals, is another.

The Negro slaves were satisfied with their happy lot; abolitionists were crude Bolshevik fanatics; southern slave-owners were gentle, courtly men who, until interrupted by the Civil War, had developed the only culture this country has ever known; John Brown was a mercenary horse-thief who raided Harper's Ferry to take a little more spoil; the reconstruction period was a time of Negro vandalism and brutality, for which the Ku Klux Klan was a noble and heroic remedy; the North was wrong, the South was right and the slaves should never have been freed—these are the myths the neo-feudalists preach.

The new viewpoint has even invaded Hollywood and been sent forth again to corrupt millions of young American minds, via such pictures as the recent *Prisoner of Shark Island*. This story has much the same outline as the story in The Saturday Evening Post; a kindly Southerner is arrested on a baseless charge by frenzied Northern fanatics and persecuted with an incredible ferocity (the same old pattern again, you will note, as our modern *Escape from the Soviets*).

Yes, King George should have won over the American revolutionists; and Simon Legree should have conquered the emancipators of Uncle Tom. Such is the historic viewpoint these intellectuals of an emerging American fascism are now spreading, by means not even subtle.

It is true that another group of fascists like Hearst use the sacred names of Jefferson and Lincoln as a cover for their own anti-democratic maneuvers.

This latter form of demagoguery will probably prove the more favored among the American fascists, since it appeals more to the democratic instincts of the masses.

Whichever tactic is used, we ought never to allow fascists the right to distort the history of the American people. The fight for the national tradition is one of the major battlefields in our war against a world of Hitlers and Mussolinis. America was built by the people and belongs to the people; and to hell with King George and all slave-owners, past and present! Wake up, Daughters of the American Revolution! The Hessian is at our gates!

Sharecropper

LAST year weevil, year before
Gully washin' come and craps can't grow.

Didn't make, 'cept a bale or two;
Bossman take it all for his due.

This year no weevil, no washin' rain.
Cotton grow thicker'n a hoss's mane.

Presiden' asayin' too much cotton grow;
Got to plow under every third row.

Mule say "huh"—whip say "whack;"
Plow get shovin' craps right back.

Guv'men' apayin' all what it cos';
Man get the money 'cause he the boss.

Look heah, Bossman, my share can't be foun';
Course not, nigger, you plow your share under-groun'.

Good crap, bad crap—no dif'ren' which one,
Til we start plowin' under with gattlin' gun.

LAWRENCE GELLERT.

Reds of Szechuan

On the March: Retreat

Among the Mausers march the long T'ai-ping
Muskets which had been hoarded two men's years—
Barrels bound to stock with wire and hempen string;
Farm-smithied swords march, too, and bamboo spears.
Ever our rolling eyeballs search the sky
For hostile aeroplanes of Chiang Kai-shek;
(So stoats turn on the hawk a reddened eye
And needle-fangs poised on a snake's neck.)
Long since our gun-butts shattered our own josses—
Each one, each incense-stick, each priest, a tool
Of our own landlords and the foreign bosses;
Our cult is for the great red star which tells
There is a country where the workers rule:
We brace our belts and count our rifle-shells.

In the Mountains: Waiting

Our cartridges are low; we haunt like goats
These crags—but down them boulders still can leap,
And sentries of the Kuomintang must sleep—
The better if a knife be through their throats.
We dig the root and strip the bark—our millet
Suffices but for seasoning; of hairs
Outlawed from barbering we fashion snares
For crows and mountain-rats—not worth a bullet.
For we must live till to the plains below
Our scouts can creep and peasants whet their hooks and hoes
And march to burn the rental-books;
Till then we watch mouse-footprints in the snow.
And we shall be here when the last snow melts,
Girding lean loins with empty cartridge-belts.

KENNETH PORTER.

Longshoreman's Song

HOT blood dreams not of the year's cold,
Young hands know they are stout for work.
Why must he skulking thought lurk:
What will I do when I'm old?

Fear rots the brain, slacks the hold,
Termite in sound wood: fear,
Fouling sleep, haunting love's face with a sneer:
What will I do when I'm old?

Forget. Work, sweat in the sun; hold
Your girl in bed while you are young.
Forget. Work. Love your girl: you are young.
What will she do when I'm old?

Shrewd Morgan figuring up his gold,
John D. giving a poor kid a dime
In the camera-eye-march-of-time,
Don't ask what they'll do when they are old.

They've got you working for them, sold
Out to their future from the start.
Maybe they'll help bust your heart
Twenty years before you are old.

When you are strong, pulse beating bold,
When you have work, it's a grand world.
Swing your load! It's a swell world.
What will I do when I'm old?

Heave high! Maybe you'll be paroled.
Heave! maybe you won't get stung.
God loves workers, workers die young,
Maybe we won't grow old.

"Get wise! Wake up and take ahoid,"
My girl says. "Don't wait till you die
"To look for your pie in the sky.
"Get your share before you are old.

"Is it bankers' sweat makes the corn gold?
"Whose guts are in the mortar of this town?
"Whose blood in the steel? Wake. Take your own,
"Big boy, before we grow old."

ELSA GIDLOW.

Return

What can I say . . . now that I must return
hollow-mouthed, my fingers empty of bread,
muscles rusted, arms loose in the chant of
no work, no work. . . ?

What can I say
with this heart, stark, relentless pendulum
pounding the hard crust of ribs,
stamping my footsteps into the pavements, monument of
no work, no work. . . ?

What can I say
in the pain-deep dusk of a two-room flat?
O muted tongues of man and wife . . . too late
for words, O clench the fist, steel it
to strike, to smash.

MARTHA MILLET.

A Course in French Fascism

ALFRED HIRSCH and ROGER BEAUCHAMP

WHAT are the students of French in American colleges and high schools learning about the France of today?

Until the War of 1914, most of the French textbooks published in America, aside from grammars and elementary readers, represented editions of the classics of the 17th century—with an emasculated Voltaire and an anodyne Rousseau, poems of the Romantic movement and a few novels of Balzac. The middle of the 19th century and later were represented by a number of editions of *Le Voyage de Monsieur Perrichon*—expurgated, of course—and Alphonse Daudet's *Tartarin de Tarascon*, likewise purified, together with his worst and most chauvinistic short story *La Dernière Classe*, and such unbelievable pap as Halévy's *L'Abbé Constantin*, the saccharine tale of a benevolent American heiress who subsidizes a French priest in his distribution of charity. The names which we—and the French—most highly esteem were absent—Stendhal, Flaubert, except for his *Three Tales*, Verlaine, Zola, save for a short story or so. Anatole France barely got through the sieve of purity—and with nothing of importance. Almost no contemporary material was then available in American-edited French books.

But during and immediately after the war, a few books dealing with it—not Barbusse's *Le Feu*—appeared. They were frenzied pro-French documents recounting the horrors allegedly committed by "les Boches" and detailing the misery of French families whose homes had been destroyed. Fortunately, although to the regret of the American publishers of these texts, the taste for them was soon surfeited.

But interest in France was on the ascendancy. So professors got busy editing—and expurgating—contemporary texts. Publishing houses which rarely have on their staffs any specialist in this field were ignorant purveyors of such books. No apparent attempt was made to survey the field to find out which writers really had something to offer American young men and women. The selection was haphazard and gave a picture of France that resembled Temple Bailey's sharply realistic image of America.

Who then are these French writers who were presented to the American student? And do they represent French life today?

Since 1930, and more markedly so since late 1933 and February 6, 1934, on which day great demonstrations against the fascist Croix de Feu and the policy of the French government took place, there has been a distinct cleavage. Today France is not at all one country. Class lines have divided it

sharply into two camps: on the one hand, the gentlemen of the reaction, whether they call themselves Republicans, Centrists, Fascists or Royalists: on the other hand, the People's Front, embracing Communists, Socialists and many Radical Socialists, with its Red Belt surrounding Paris. This split is of course apparent among French writers, who, much more than American writers, have always associated themselves closely with the political groups of the day.

A recent sign of this division is indicated in three proclamations, all dealing with the invasion of Ethiopia. Several months ago, a group of writers, soon to be known as "the 64," signed a statement in support of Italy. The general tenets of the manifesto entitled "For the Defense of the West," are all too familiar to those who have followed the careers of Mussolini and Hitler. The manifesto decries sanctions, claims that the League of Nations, obedient to the will of England, is "imperilling the future of civilization."

We, French intellectuals, want nothing to do with these sanctions or this war. . . . They [the European nations] do not hesitate to treat Italy as a culprit, to point it out to the world as the common enemy—under pretext of protecting in Africa the independence of a hodge-podge of uneducated tribes. . . . The undersigned therefore believe it their duty to rise up against this monstrous cause of death, calculated to ruin definitively the most precious country in our universe. . . . This fratricidal conflict which would put the security of our world at the mercy of a few savage tribes . . . would not only be a crime against peace, but an unforgivable attack upon Occidental civilization, i.e., against the only valid future which, today as yesterday, is open to mankind. We intellectuals who must protect culture . . . since we profit most from its benefits, cannot let civilization choose against its own interests. To prevent such a suicide, we appeal to all the forces of the intellect.

This declaration, widely printed in the Rightist press, was immediately answered by two manifestoes: one, entitled "For Justice and Peace," signed by a large number of Catholic writers and teachers, the other by several hundred intellectuals who definitely took sides with the People's Front.

But we are particularly interested in the identity of the signers of the first (fascist) manifesto. Their place in and influence on contemporary French literature has been on the wane for decades, if indeed it ever existed at all. Yet these are the writers who are presented to the American student as representative of life and letters in contemporary France. American editions of a score of French texts written by individuals among "the 64" reveal the predominant role played in American schools and colleges by various writers on the list of fascist signers.

Who are the writers we find when we examine the composition of the fascist list?

Eleven of "the 64," André Bellessort, Louis Bertrand, Abel Bonnard, Henry Bordeaux, André Chaumeix, Maurice Donnay, Edouard Estaunié, Abel Hermant, Claude Farrère, Louis Madelin, and Pierre de Nolhac, are members of the French Academy, that haven of the prolific French writer who conforms, of high military commanders, ranking members of the Catholic clergy and others who have distinguished themselves "pour la Patrie," the so-called Immortals. It is this same Academy, founded by Cardinal Richelieu in 1635, which failed to elect to membership Molière, Rousseau, Diderot, Stendhal, Balzac, Baudelaire, Flaubert, Verlaine, de Maupassant, Zola and Proust, i.e., those writers who have given France its true literary "immortality;" not to speak of such present-day writers as Romain Rolland, Jules Romains and André Gide.

Among the other signers of the fascist manifesto are Léon Daudet and Charles Maurras, co-editors of the Royalist Action Française and Henri Massis, author of the manifesto.

The contents of the books of a few of these fascist Academicians and their co-signers are worthy of some analysis. It would be well to begin with Henry Bordeaux, Academician since 1919, whose writings are by far the most widely edited among contemporary French texts in America. This is the same man of whom it is proverbially said in France: "In case of incurable insomnia, when all other soporifics have failed, one page of Henry Bordeaux will put the patient to sleep in five minutes." Besides two volumes published by Nelson in 1910 and 1917 respectively, his offerings to American students appear in no less than seven more recent books. These include three novels: two editions of *La Maison*, one published by Heath in 1923, the other by Ginn in 1930; *La Peur de Vivre*, Holt, 1922; and *La Nouvelle Croisade des Enfants*, Allyn and Bacon. His stories are included in a collection put out by Ginn, 1929, another by Heath, 1929, and in a Holt selection of 33 stories. This last volume has had a sale of over 2,700 copies in the colleges alone with Duke University buying 310. Columbia, William and Mary, Harvard, Hamilton, Johns Hopkins, the University of Illinois, the University of Michigan, the University of Minnesota and the University of Pennsylvania are among the 69 colleges on the list which covers 30 states, the District of Columbia and Canada.

The story of Bordeaux' *La Maison*

(which may be translated as *Our Home*) follows:

Locale: Provincial France. Date: in 1870's. We are in a middle-class home, grandfather, father, mother and son. Grandfather takes his young grandson to several meetings where such forbidden topics as republicanism and anti-clericalism are discussed. Father learns of this and is angry. He tells grandpap that "every family has its own traditions; ours, until you came along, were simple and fine: God and the King." The young son, forbidden by his father any further association with his grandfather's wicked friends, comes to hate his father. But when the latter dies, little Johnny returns to his home, to the "dynasty," like the Prince of Wales, and does as his father had always wanted. "Like a king," he says, "I was responsible for the decay or the prosperity of my kingdom, our home." Coupled with this return to sanity, in the form of reaction, comes also his "rebirth" into the religion of his family as the book ends.

In the short-story collection put out by Ginn in 1929, besides a war story of Bordeaux, we find a story by Gaston Chérau, another of the signers, who also has a book of short stories on the Holt list.

Our hero's chief hobby is collecting butterflies. A certain rare specimen has eluded him for years. He comes to the momentous decision that he must have one even though a trip to Africa is necessary. He buys his ticket. As he is about to take the boat in Marseilles, he discovers three of the rare butterflies in a shop there. He buys them but frees them because "reality was further along . . . beyond . . . over the seas and for that reason, more beautiful. . . . Whenever reality is so beautiful," he concludes, "it is in a place where one is not."

Edouard Estaunié, member of the French Academy since 1923, whose name also graces the fascist list, has been honored with two American textbooks. The first *L'Appel de la Route*, appeared in 1926, Ginn, the second, *Tels qu'ils Furent, (As They Used to Be)* in 1929, Heath. First published in France in 1927, the story covers the period 1867-1871.

A comely young lady, Aurélie, returns home from the convent where she has spent several years. She marries a Protestant who, horror of horrors, is also a Republican. [Remember that this is during the reign of Napoleon III, whose rule ended with the war of 1870-1871.] The young matron is disowned. Meanwhile, added disgrace, her uncle marries a domestic. After the war [and the period of the Paris Commune which is, of course, not mentioned], the business firm of Aurélie's husband is on the verge of bankruptcy. Her mother and her uncle prepare to save the family's black sheep and they wire her to come to them. As she departs from southern France for Paris, her mother has a heart attack and dies before her arrival. Aurélie's husband, meanwhile, has miraculously been able to save himself from bankruptcy.

In *L'Enfant de la Victoire, (Child of Victory)*, Macmillan, 1933, written by François Duhourcau, still another fascist signer, we gather:

Gérard, whose father was killed in the war, and who is thereby forced to go to work, becomes, of all things, a taxi driver in Paris, much to the disgust of his mother. "Has he lost his

mind?" she laments. She reproaches him: "Do you think your father and I raised you for that? Your pride, I still hope, will make you suffer in this new occupation." But Gérard is obdurate. "Not for long, I assure you," he says. "The memories which hurt me I shall tear from my heart."

Gérard falls under the influence of Monsieur Lesrelle, who gives him the following advice: "My child . . . you are suffering; you are one of those whose hearth and future have been wrecked by the storm of war. . . . Let those who are stronger and better armed by fortune build the dike in the shelter of which a nation lives happy and free! Let us at least keep from destroying the barrier which preserves us from barbarism. As for us little fellows—you, still weak, and I, worn out with years—let us be content with little. My lodging is wretched, almost a garret, a Diogenes' tub. But my window looks out on one of the most beautiful places in the world. I see Notre Dame, the colonnade of the Louvre, the tower of St. Germain l'Auxerrois, all memories of a magnificent history. . . . My very poverty increases my happiness. Yes, I have lost three quarters of my income and the high cost of living condemns me more and more to abstinence. Well, that makes me spiritual. This evening, along the quays which make up my domain, insensitive to the noise of busses and taxis, I shall be intoxicated by the sunset reflected by the Seine. I shall dream of the eternal Elysian Fields to which age is bringing me ever closer."

Strengthened, Gérard is able to withstand the subversive Vilbour, a rough-and-tumble taxi-driver, who "confided to him with a superior air that Moscow was keeping in France delegates provided with check books."

"Then," replied Gérard, "I am even less with you. You are against France. Moscow is foreign and the ally of Berlin."

Thus virtue wins once more.

But enough. The other texts used in America and written by various of "the 64" are of the same genre, corpses from a land where vital currents are making history day by day.

Other fascist signers whose texts are used in American colleges and schools include: René Bizet, André Demaison, Claude Farrère (whose real name is Frédéric-Charles-Pierre-Edouard Bargone and who is represented in four texts), and Maurice Constantin-Weyer whose *Un Homme se penche sur son Passé (Man Scans His Past)* has been bought by 14 colleges, Smith alone taking 305 copies. These texts are published by Holt, Appleton Century, Cambridge University Press, Oxford University Press and Harrap. A projected text by Abel Hermant is on the Heath list.

A second source of information for the American student is conventional histories. Among these very "64" are historians whose works have appeared here in English and French and which are used as college reference books. Louis Madelin, a member of the Academy, has an imposing number of books in the Columbia University Library. From 1916 to 1920 he wrote at least four war books and his more recent translated works include *The Consulate and the Empire*, Putnam's, 1934, and *Figures of the Revolution*, Macaulay, 1929.

Bernard Faÿ, of the Collège de France, has, on several occasions, been a guest professor at Columbia, whose library contains a

presentation copy of his *L'Empire américain et sa Démocratie*, 1926. Considered an authority on America in French academic circles, his *Roosevelt and his America* was published by Little Brown and Company in 1933, as was his *Two Franklins, Fathers of American Democracy*. *George Washington, Gentilhomme* appeared in America as *George Washington, Republican Aristocrat*, an interesting little commentary on the desire to conform to American ideals, Houghton Mifflin, 1931.

Henri Béraud's *Twelve Portraits of the French Revolution* was published by Little Brown and Company while *The Stupid Nineteenth Century* by Léon Daudet appeared in English in 1928, Harcourt Brace.

Certainly, history, as presented by these signers of a fascist manifesto, and particularly American history, (Faÿ), can hardly give students that "objectivity" on which our universities pride themselves.

From still a third source the American student learns of contemporary France. The teachers cannot afford to buy new books as they appear direct from France, they cannot even afford to subscribe for journals which might give relatively objective criticisms of modern books, and hence they are forced to rely on an agency of selection, a book committee, "Selections Sequana" (Latin for Seine), whose point of view they have never been able to investigate. As a result, in a number of colleges, the only new French books added to the library have been chosen by this committee.

The Selections Sequana are more or less equivalent to our various book clubs. Its editors include four signers of the fascist manifesto, Henri Massis, Henry Bordeaux, André Chaumeix and Abel Bonnard. Six members of the French Academy are on the board including Paul Valéry, an ardent anti-Dreyfusard thirty years ago. Jacques Bainville, contributor to the Royalist Action Française until his death, was an editor. Another of its editors is Fortunat Strowski, professor at the Sorbonne. Monsieur Strowski, who taught at Columbia during the summer of 1929 and for two terms in 1930, spoke to one of the writers of this article about politics late in 1931. Full of confidence in the future of capitalism, he stated: "You and I do work of another nature: if that keeps us busy, it is enough. After all, what can we do to remedy the political and economic situation of the world?" Shortly after, in accepting the chair of French literature at the Sorbonne, he declaimed: "Nature used to govern man. Today man governs nature; therefore we must study, understand, the man of today. . . . This chair will help foreign students to understand France. It can aid the French students in *calming their restlessness*." (Our emphasis.)

It may be interesting to note that within the past few weeks the Book of the Month Club has become associated with the Société Nouvelle Sequana in the promotion of a French book club for American readers.

It is not surprising that a survey of the selections of this editorial board in the last five years reveals a number of books resembling those cited above. In addition to most of the signers mentioned above, the following have been included: Bedel, MacOrlan, Bailly, Donnay, Fayard and Boulenger.

Must the American student accept these offerings? No. If he refuses to make use of these books and writes the publishers to that effect, the latter, anxious to please and to profit, will soon correct this abuse.

We believe that American professors choose the texts they do because they are unfamiliar with the vital and greater part of contemporary French literature rather than because they are deliberately fascist-minded. A college teacher has certain standards of living, of dress, that he must maintain; often he must do a certain amount of entertaining—particularly in campus colleges. He has a family, often unemployed relatives dependent on him. So, to add to

his low income, he turns to editing French texts. He decides to edit another book by some author who seems to be well represented already, e. g., Henry Bordeaux—believing this to be an indication of future sales.

What must be done to remedy this situation? Strong American Federation of Teachers locals must be developed to demand an increase in salaries, a lighter teaching load, some form of tenure. With improved working conditions, the teacher would be able to keep informed of what is happening in the world as a whole, and in his specialized field of literature, to travel, and to provide more vital texts for his students.

In the meantime, we recommend immediately the editing of more recent works of Romain Rolland than the first and sixth volumes of *Jean-Christophe*, which appeared in English in 1910, of more serious works of Jules Romains than his little farce *Knock*. Certainly his *Men of Good Will*, so well

received in America, contains ample material for classroom use. André Gide's *The Counterfeiters*, or the more recently translated *If it Die*, are replete with excellent material as is Montherlant's *They Perish in Their Pride*, Jean-Richard Bloch's *And Company* and André Chamson's *Road or Mountain Tavern*.

Finally, we wish to emphasize that it is not our intention to condemn what is past or to criticize unjustly either editors or publishers of these texts. However, since the fascist tendency of the writers in question has now become all too evident, we must urge immediate recognition of that fact and appropriate action to bring their influence on American students to an end. France today is not the country of 1914, nor is it fascist. The student of contemporary French literature should be provided with a picture of France as it lives, breathes and struggles against what Germany and Italy and its own La Rocque stand for.

This Way, Lawyer!

S. M. BLINKEN

IN MY previous article (*THE NEW MASSES*, April 14) I briefly described the disastrous condition in which the overwhelming majority of "average American lawyers" now find themselves. In outlining the underlying causes, there was mention of certain remedies—particularly, the proposal made by William L. Ransom, president of the American Bar Association. Concretely, the A.B.A. is now attempting to make membership in its state associations obligatory to every lawyer upon his admission to the bar, and by means of a contemplated "House of Delegates," to amalgamate lawyers into national unity. This, of course, would bring all lawyers under the direct control of the A.B.A. But would such a result be desirable? Is the A.B.A., as now constituted, capable of constructive leadership in the interests of the "rank and file," the overwhelming majority of lawyers?

Now, the membership of the A.B.A. is found chiefly in the largest cities; it therefore does not represent the nation's bar as a whole. Frequently, as everyone knows, lawyers join the association for the supposed prestige. Their contact with it is formal and passive. At a recent incident in the New York County Lawyers' Association, in the discussion of an important amendment to the by-laws, a quorum of 150 was lacking out of a total membership of 6,000 in this, the second largest bar association in the country!

In these lean years the annual \$8 dues have become a serious matter. The New York County Lawyers' Association charges

\$20 (\$12.50 for those practicing less than ten years). The aristocratic Association of the Bar of the City of New York requires an initiation fee of \$50 and \$25 annual dues from members practicing less than ten years; \$100 initiation and \$75 annually from those admitted more than ten years. The New York State Bar Association requires \$10 yearly dues. Annual dinners and other functions (honoring newly-elected judges, etc.) usually cost five dollars a head and are strictly formal affairs. This effectively keeps the average lawyer at a distance. The result is that those lawyers are brought together who can generally afford these luxuries, with an occasional penurious straggler who sacrifices his hard-earned dollars in the hope that contact with the "big shots" will somehow help him simonize his shingle.

If the bar associations as now constituted comprise a small percentage of "successful" lawyers hardly representative of the great body of their colleagues, there is no cause for surprise at finding democratic control within the associations entirely missing. Restrictions on growth of membership and indifference and inertia result in control being vested in the hands of a few. The President and Board of Directors are usually all-powerful. Nomination of officers is generally controlled by committee selection. While members may nominate officers, those nominees are "considered" only if they are "safe." The machinery of control is self-perpetuating: one ruling group hands over the reins to its successor and conservatism dominates. Insulated against progress and innovation,

the bar associations have always been supporters of the status quo. Naturally they do not squarely face the economic problems of the average lawyer as a member of society, and his special professional problems, in these days of economic breakdown.

We have alluded to a recent incident at the New York County Lawyers' Association. After its Board of Directors had thrice refused to recommend the creation of a Committee on Labor Law and Social Legislation, it became necessary to bring the matter up before the general membership. A quorum of 150 was lacking. Coming on again (barely 200 attended) and requiring a two-thirds vote for adoption, the resolution was defeated by a margin of three votes—115 for and 60 against. The need for such a committee was made abundantly clear, though the president alone was to appoint its members, who, under the rules, were responsible to the Board of Directors which could accept or reject its findings. But these considerations proved meaningless. A lawyers' association simply must not concern itself with things like measures of social welfare. Such "radicals" as Judge Samuel Seabury and Judge Gustave Hartman, Louis Waldman, Matthew Levy and others, might favor the resolution, and yet the opposition of those afraid to open a Pandora's Box of intelligent inquiry by one of our largest bar associations was sufficient to frustrate the overwhelming desire of its members.

In the light of these considerations, the proposal of the A.B.A. to "integrate" the bar associations and set up a national House

of Delegates of the legal profession stops short. Let us have such integration, but let us emphasize the absolute necessity of obtaining within the bar associations and the proposed House of Delegates genuine representation of the rank-and-file bar. This can be achieved by the broadest democratization of procedure within the bar associations, their realistic considerations of the actual problems and wants of the average lawyer. Basically, the bar must consider and propose ways and means of emancipating the lawyer from his present condition. Otherwise, the movement may utilize the growing discontent among lawyers, to entrench further the reactionaries now controlling the bar associations and lead the rank-and-file lawyer, looking for a way out of his distress, down a blind alley of confusion.

Six years of the depression, with no relief in sight, have made increasing numbers of lawyers realize that remedy for their economic ills lies only in the recognition of the social character of their profession and its permanent removal from the insecurity of a ferocious competitive struggle.

The practice of law is as social in character as the practice of medicine. There is hardly a phase of our national life in which law fails to play an important part. Yet its practitioners are forced into anarchistic competition, the unsocial consequences of which have been recognized as the social function of law practice has developed. Governmental, salaried, legal staffs have increased. Public Legal Aid Societies, defense organizations, such as the American Civil Liberties Union and the International Labor Defense, testify to growing public demand for legal services. Rising popular unrest, bringing repression of civil liberties, the right to organize, strike and picket, etc., has created demands for legal assistance far beyond the capacities of existing public agencies. The indigence of the average small businessman, professional and worker has largely deprived thousands of them of needed legal advice. And the situation threatens to become worse unless means are found to prevent it.

This is the most effective answer to those who contend that over-crowding in the profession is the cause of the lawyers' ills. There are not too many lawyers; there are too few people given the opportunity to use the services of lawyers. Is it not time for society to recognize the social necessity, and for the lawyers to take measures accordingly?

Any remedy, however, is based on the promise that the lawyer is entitled to a decent standard of living. Assuming, for instance, that in New York a minimum income of \$50 weekly is essential, let us consider how such a basic income would be related to the several categories of lawyers.

In the first group, lawyers employed by law firms, government and private business and generally on a full-time basis, are concerned primarily with wages, hours, working conditions and a minimum scale of wages, which can be obtained, as always, by organization.

To provide for the general practitioner and unemployed lawyer and to meet the public need the State will undertake to do as follows:

(a) Enact into law a recognition of the social nature of the lawyer's services and of his right therefore to a standard of living measured by a minimum of \$50 per week;

(b) Guarantee such income to each lawyer;

(c) Create a number of legal bureaus to be set up as permanent agencies for service to the public at large;

(d) Render legal aid to the public which shall not be contingent except upon inability to pay private lawyers; such service to be given freely and irrespective of the client's race, creed or religion, previous criminal record, social or economic beliefs or political affiliations.

The unit of work may be designated as a client-hour. The practitioner who does not now earn a minimum of \$50 weekly will be required to render services of a minimum number of unit-hours per week—for his present clients and those who seek him out. Proof of such services can be made by voucher, and the practitioner will be entitled to receive the difference between his earnings in private practice and the \$50 guaranteed by the State. If exigencies demand him to render more than the prescribed number of client-hours, he may be entitled to a maximum of, say, \$75 per week. The minimum guarantee is not to be denied to the practitioner honestly in practice when the law takes effect, merely because he does not then render to clients the minimum of client-hours. Only after a specified period, if his practice does not meet the minimum requirements, will he be required to enroll at a legal bureau. Regardless of such enrollment, he will be entitled to sufficient time off to render outside services, the time and fees of which shall be subtracted to meet bureau requirements.

To obtain the benefits of the law all unemployed lawyers will be required to enroll at legal bureaus, where they will be classified according to training and preferences. Since most lawyers prefer the type of work they are best suited for, this will cause little difficulty. Individual practitioners and unemployed lawyers may decline the State benefits whenever they choose.

From measures such as we here broadly suggest, the public will be the chief beneficiary. It can choose its own lawyer or go to a legal bureau. No one will be denied legal advice or services and as experts develop in the various departments, legal services as a whole will reach a new high level. The employed lawyer will find his own standard of living raised. The fact that he can obtain State benefits will compel his employers to raise his income to at least the fixed standard. The law will, of course, specifically prohibit state subsidies to employers in order to raise the wages of his employees to the required minimum. Hours and working conditions to accord with the standards will be required. The employed lawyer will thus be the recipient of benefits which result from

the standards set up for the entire profession.

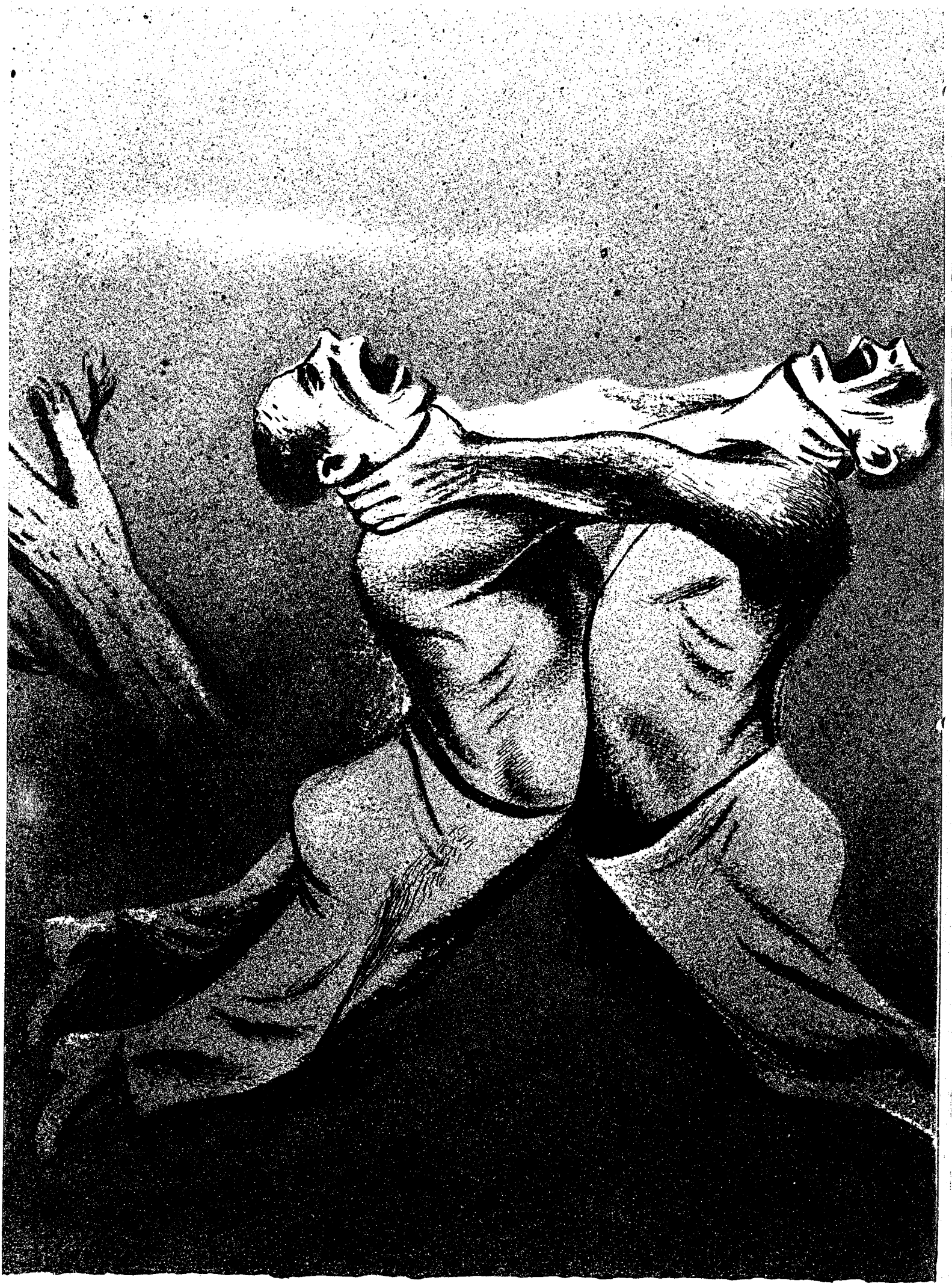
At the beginning, there may be some confusion. How, for instance, will it be possible to check on the time a lawyer devotes to certain matters? Such a difficulty will be solved as the work of the legal bureaus develops and standards evolve in actual practice. We are not here concerned with the details, but with the basic plan suggested which we do not propose as definitive. The final plan, of course, can evolve only from considered discussion by the rank-and-file bar.

Until the final plan is formulated, specific public projects can be established to employ lawyers' services, such as the assignment of lawyers to hospitals, to defend financially-pressed persons accused of crime, to police stations to advise with arrested persons; the establishment of regional law libraries and the assignment of lawyers to take charge; the preparation and publication by patent attorneys of a complete index of patents (such as Borden's Index of Chemical Patents); the revision of public records, etc.

Needless to say, a program such as we have outlined is not realized for the asking. Excepting the small percentage of the privileged upper strata, all lawyers will have to join in a common effort to achieve it. The recognition of common problems, and common efforts to solve them will give the average lawyer a sense of unity with his colleagues. It will do for lawyers what organization has done for others. Their combined efforts, the realization that the good of one is the good of all, can and will bring a fruitful program into being.

In the course of their struggles to achieve ends, lawyers will come to understand that they cannot isolate themselves from the economic struggles going on about them. Because our competitive society has reduced them to the condition of millions of other workers who have been cut off from the sources of life, lawyers can now see that their own fate is tied to that of the masses whom they must serve. While seeking their own salvation they will support the same struggle on the part of others. They will learn to value and protect the Bill of Rights which they have sworn to defend. They will recognize that inherent in the defense of the Bill of Rights is the truest expression of their public duty—to oppose reactionary policies and unscrupulous attacks of Bourbons who would sweep away the people's rights of free speech, free assemblage, freedom of organization and demonstration and equality. They will no longer regard themselves as a sort of privileged, superior caste.

In publishing Mr. Blinken's article THE NEW MASSES does not necessarily subscribe to his proposals. Any program attempting a solution through governmental agencies will be menaced with dangers and difficulties. However, as the first constructive program for lawyers, this article is offered as a stimulus to discussion. Letters from readers are invited.—THE EDITORS.



THE WORLD WE LIVE IN

William Gropper

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Our Readers' Forum

American "Bitter Stream"

In your last issue John L. Spivak reviewed an Italian play on rural life. (The Theater Union's *Bitter Stream*.) He says we Americans would not understand Mussolini's policy of taking land from the poor and adding it to the big estates. He says it doesn't happen here.

Hasn't Spivak heard of the suppressed Meyer's A.A.A. report in which she estimates about 300,000 croppers and tenants were driven from the land under the A. A. A. and compares the situation with "war-torn Belgium"?

Foreclosures have more than doubled in 1935 as compared with 1934. The Federal Land Banks are operating tremendous estates that are a combination of many small farms. Tenancy in the north has increased a great deal because the government is foreclosing on debt-ridden farmers as well as the banks.

In the south we are subjected to as great or greater robbery and persecution as are the farming people of Italy.

TOM BURKE, Secretary,
Birmingham, Ala. Sharecroppers' Union.

"World's Greatest Bluffer"

To get the full flavor of Knox's personality, charm and success-qualities you have to have known him. You have to have heard his fellow-townsmen refer to him as "Fathead Frank" as he was strutting up Hanover Street in Manchester on his way to the offices of his Union Leader—and does the name fit! You have to have heard at first hand the opinion of his uncanny ability that those in New Hampshire have who "knew him when." You have to have seen him in his role of big-frog-in-little-pond to appreciate his remarkable resemblance to a combination W. C. Fields-Major Hoople.

And it would help some to have lived in his stronghold in the Granite Hills and to have read his papers, morning and evening, year after year. Here in New York it is difficult to realize the tremendous power one man, through a newspaper monopoly, can have over the minds and actions of practically an entire state and how vicious this influence can be when completely subservient to the interests of a dominant industry, in this case the Amoskeag Textile Company.

At the time of the textile strike the Colonel's papers so misrepresented the strike and misled the strikers that I heard men, exploited by the Amoskeag for twenty and thirty years and more, quoting them to their cronies to show how well off they were as compared with employees of other mills and arguing "Why should we fight their battles for them?" The Manchester dailies ran full- and double-page-ads of the Amoskeag appealing to the "citizens of Manchester" (of whom almost half were Amoskeag employees) to witness the injustices the mills were suffering and completely ignored the case for the workers.

During the recent "referendum" in Manchester on the possibility of reopening the mills (they've been closed since October, increasing the country's unemployed by 10,000), Knox's hirelings gave unstinted approval to one of the most outrageous cases of human exploitation in the history of American labor, whereby the workers, after being starved for six months, were asked to vote yes on a pay-cut to make possible the profitable operation of the mills, and on a basis of technical improvement which would keep hundreds of them still jobless.

It's even worse when you know that at a time when the "Amoskeag Manufacturing Co." is in the red, the "Amoskeag Co.," a controlling holding company, has been for years sucking the profits from the industry into the pockets of a group headed by F. C. Dumaine, well-known financier.

SMASH THE SEDITION BILLS!

The Tydings-McCormack bill would make it a crime to criticize militarism; the Russell-Kramer bill would prevent anyone from expressing any opinion distasteful to America's fascists. Help smash these sedition bills. Send your protests to THE NEW MASSES and we will forward them to Washington.

Yes, it might be a help to workers in the coming elections (if old Teddy's "right-hand man" is nominated) to know that in Col. Frank Knox they have not only the world's greatest bluffer and essential ignoramus, but one of labor's worst enemies, a man so full of self-esteem and susceptible to flattery that big business would have no difficulty in convincing him that America could be saved only through the organization of, say, "Col. Knox's Rough Riders of 1936."

New York City.

TED HERRICK.

From a "Desert Rat"

I am writing this that you may be spared the expense of stamps and stationery in your efforts to increase circulation.

Much as I would like to help, my circumstances prevent.

I am what is known colloquially as a "desert rat," that is, a gold prospector, 81 years old and I am roosting up in the mountains on some gold property which is expected to take care of me when I get old. Eleven miles from S— with a few passersby and few contacts in S—, whose population is predominantly Mormon, hard stuff to educate.

I have been in the fight 45 years, but these folks are the limit.

However, all is not hopeless, for we have a small squad working, who are utilizing every opportunity and making some headway, though handicapped by the fact that they are P.W.A. workers and a printed warning is posted in the shop, in regard to talking politics. I pass my NEW MASSES along, with two copies of Soviet Russia Today, Moscow Weekly News, Sunday Worker, Farmer's National Weekly and American Guardian.

Some little talk of the Farmer-Labor Party and a good opening with someone to take the lead. I find a general and increasing interest in Russia's

progress and this seems to be the best aid as it furnishes an object lesson.

I take much pride in our writers whose use of the "King's English," in making every word convey its part of a vital message, is in striking contrast to the bourgeois writers who string words together with more regard for euphonious arrangement than for any message they convey. The news that comes from all over in regard to acceleration of the spirit of resistance to the status quo, should hearten us all. May your shadows never grow less.

S—, Arizona.

W. R.

Marxian News

I have just finished reading Bruce Minton's article, "They Call It 'Mutiny,'" here in the office of the strike headquarters and in my opinion and that of the men in the headquarters it is excellent.

As a rule I don't make comments on articles, but your story merits much credit and I am breaking myself in on congratulating writers of real Marxian news articles.

One thing I can say that you have really covered the story as I never saw it covered before; but one main thing you forgot to stress, that is the fact of how the officials maintain themselves in power through terroristic means (you touched on this in the case of Ivan Munter); right now there are two of the strikers here in the office that are all cut up from knife wounds by these so-called "union men" of the officials.

NORMAN DUNCAN.

"Spain, 1931-1936"

Drawings entitled "Spain, 1931-1936," by Helios Gomez, in the March 31 issue, are masterpieces. Each drawing is vivid, strong, glowing with vitality. The bold, clear, artistic strokes stand out and show the marks of genius. Every detail and expression brings out the emotions behind the individuals and groups that are depicted.

I would like to see more of Helios Gomez' drawings. I have framed this group and hung it on the wall.

Sierre Madre, Calif.

HARRY LAMPERT.

What About Capone?

Can you furnish more information regarding the quotation from Al Capone in the March 24 issue? I am anxious to know if Mr. Capone said any more. Did he go on and rail against "government interference with private enterprise" or "regimentation" from both of which we must acknowledge he is suffering? Did he denounce Tugwell?

Do you expect this to go further? Do you think the 1936 Republican platform will provide for amnesty to Al as a political prisoner? Or do you think the Liberty League will carry placards demanding freedom for one of their sympathizers who has been persecuted because the government did not approve of his "rugged individualism"?

JOHN ALDEN.

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REVIEW AND COMMENT

The New Civilization

GEORGE SOULE, reviewing the Webbs' book¹ in *The New Republic*, wrote: "Those who believe that the Soviet Union is a great new civilization should not be surprised that Sidney and Beatrice Webb have so portrayed it, as any good scientist will, if the belief is well grounded."

That should be the case, but how often have visitors to the Soviet Union come back with all their pictures photographed on the film of their prejudices. This has, of course, been less true of scientists, trained in accurate observation, than of literary men, indulgent to their finicky senses, accustomed to isolation and obviously feeling timid and out of place in a milieu where the masses dominate. In fact, scientists have proved to be in this science-guided land the most trustworthy reporters; and economists like George Soule himself, geneticists like Muller, medical men like Kingsbury and Frankwood Williams, and agronomists, engineers, biologists, et al, have been most successful in communicating the reality of the new civilization in the Soviet Union.

Nevertheless, the appearance of the Webbs' book is an historic event; of that the rage of the reactionaries is as good a testimony as the enthusiasm of radicals. In some respects its appearance is comparable to the address made by the great scientist, Ivan Pavlov, who, publicly critical of the Soviet regime since its inception, finally last year at the Physiological Congress in Leningrad turned to praise the Soviet regime, characterizing its work as the greatest scientific experiment ever undertaken on earth. There Pavlov the scientist paid his respects to the scientists Marx, Engels, Lenin and their continuers. Here, as Socialists as well as scientists, the Webbs, after years of critical questioning, acknowledge the Socialist authenticity of the Soviet State.

The Soviet Union is making the business of living in a territory it occupies, a realization of the claim that Socialism is science. What is science? It is the continuous expansion and systematized arrangement of verified human knowledge. When man depends upon science he depends upon himself. The Soviet system is, therefore, socially the most self-reliant system yet to enter human affairs. It depends neither upon providence nor upon mystic virtues of human personality.

The Webbs' great book is a scientific investigation of a field that can best be presented scientifically. In thoroughness, system and objectivity it is beyond question the finest book on the Soviet Union yet pub-

lished, the best of its predecessors having attempted only partial coverage by comparison. They deal with man in the Soviet Union as citizen, as producer, as consumer; they cover the new culture, the new social relationships, the conscious undertaking to remake man, deformed by previous social systems. The enumeration of the mere subject material would fill the page. In their study they have left nothing to unsupported impression; they have proceeded by a strict examination of evidence.

The theme of their book may be stated by the subtitle, *A New Civilization?* It is put there as a question, but long before the last page the question has been answered. The answer is "yes." The shift of ownership of the means of production from an exploiting class to the masses, the shift of political power to the same hands, the change of motives for human action from that of individual gain to that of social gain, these have produced a society startlingly different from any the world has known before.

Our conception of civilization has been influenced by the study of dead cultures with their broken temples, statuary, literature and other artistic remains. Our criteria for civilization have therefore been chiefly cultural and have led to admiration for societies that, though they maintained themselves by slavery and other forms of human exploitation, produced good art; this, in some cases, leading to the vicious theory that human exploitation by a privileged class is a precondition of civilization.

In the new civilization of Soviet Communism, however, the criterion is maximum self-fulfillment for all and comfort, leisure, security and happiness for all. That maximum has certainly not yet been realized, however high the masses have risen above their status under czarism. They are not now enjoying the comforts of the upper levels of employed workers in the more advanced capitalist countries. But they all have jobs and the stimulating prospect of a constantly rising standard of living; they are secure against humanly preventable misfortune; they have a sense of direct participation in the life of the community with all that that adds to alertness and human dignity, and the talented among them get a break. From factories and fields as well as from the schools they are sent into training or directly into places in their fields.

In capitalist countries with their ingrained individualism the judgment of culture is scarcely more than a census of names. No account is taken as to whether what the named artists produce are refinements of degeneracy or gestures of despair; or whether

they have audience or influence. From a broader point of view, taking the effects of art and the response of audience into consideration, it becomes clear at once that in comparison with capitalist civilization, Soviet civilization is more universal and healthier.

Whether contemporary Soviet writers, painters, sculptors, architects, composers and so on are of classical rank does not matter so much. (Taken as a whole, considering the generally acknowledged masterpieces in the theater, ballet and the cinema, Soviet art production, even by absolute standards, is extraordinary.) What is more important is that, for the first time in recorded history, all the cultural resources of the people are utilized; the best art is accessible to all and the response of the masses is vigorous. There is no demand for the stinking spew served to the masses as a people's art by the Hearsts, Beaverbrooks and Cotys in capitalist countries. Soviet mass culture is as a lofty plateau compared to the sublevel Dead Sea of capitalism.

The Webbs have made the mass character of Soviet civilization clear. It is one of the achievements of their book. Superficial observers who see an OGPU detective in every inquisitive passerby, who don't feel informed until they interview an official and then conclude that the officialdom is supreme, do not see it. The Webbs, however, analyzing every political and economic process, following the streams of authority flowing from the countless factory and agricultural Soviets, the shop meetings, the comradesly courts in apartment houses and elsewhere, find it where it exists. It is for this reason that they speak with so much enthusiasm of the actual, functioning democracy of the Soviets.

We, in capitalist democracies, have become accustomed to thinking of democracy as something latent. About once a year we vote. The act has so little reality that it takes an exceptional issue to bring out a majority of the electorate. The assumption is that when things get too thick the people will do something about it. It turns out that when they go beyond the casting of ballots in the exercise of civil liberties they have to explain it to the judge. Politics long ago ceased being a civic activity. It has become a profession, but a profession without professional standards, training or ethics; with the key posts of political power reserved for members of the exploiting class.

As the Webbs point out, the Soviet citizen does infinitely more than vote. To the outsider meetings seem incessant. They are incessant, but through those meetings the mass will is expressed, given shape in debate, the process continuing until it makes its way to the executive organs of government for fulfillment. Considering also functions on shop

¹ *Soviet Communism: A New Civilization?* by Beatrice and Sidney Webb. 2 vols., boxed. Charles Scribner's Sons. \$7.50.

and neighborhood committees and work in voluntary organizations it is a rare Soviet citizen who is not, in some way, voluntarily but responsibly carrying on important items in the official and unofficial administration of the community. Foreigners are sometimes amused by the proprietary feeling of Soviet citizens toward public works. Citizen Ivan says "our" or even "my subway" and the foreign visitor secretly smiles. But Ivan has good reason to claim ownership. His share in it is secured by legal guarantees and by practical use; and he has earned it often by the special claim of having invested his voluntary labor in it.

One thing the Webbs return to until it has an almost symphonic resonance in the book is the *multiformity* of Soviet life. The common criticism of socialist society is that it must reduce humanity to the monotony of the ant heap. Individuality must wither away, life becoming uniform and the individual fastened into his place in the social machine as immovably as a rivet.

Marxist thinkers have polemicized endlessly against this caricature of socialist order. They have patiently explained over and over again that socialism is designed above all to end the chaining of the individual who, except for the members of the privileged classes under capitalism, is kept from self-fulfillment by the de-individualizing nature of his work and the frustrations of poverty.

In showing how the liberation of the individual actually occurs, not for a few but for all in the first functioning socialist society, the Webbs have done a remarkable service equal in importance to their conclusive demonstration of the mass character of the Soviet system. They point out first that there is no fixed political constitution. Soviet institutions are probably the most fluid in the world, altering constantly to meet the demands of a society in continuous growth.

In the field of production where tendencies toward uniformity might be anticipated, new forms occur. There are craftsmen and professionals working independently; there are independent producers organized into co-operatives. Some factories grow their own food on surrounding farmland; others handle their own distribution; while some distributing co-operatives carry on part of their own goods production. This multiformity is equally to be seen in the political and the cultural process. The variety to be seen when any section of Soviet life is analyzed is bewildering.

The Webbs shrewdly and justifiably throw the charge back at the accusers. They say: look at the masses in capitalist democracies. Can they form or express an opinion? Indeed, the average man is so voiceless that in America the demagogue, calling him the "forgotten man," has to remind him of his political existence. By the limitations of purchasing power he is reduced to a choiceless existence almost as effectively as slaves who lived as their masters arranged. In company towns the parallel is quite complete. He has

actually no choice of career, residence, furniture, food, entertainment. He takes what his marginal income limits him to. Among the masses only individuals with phenomenal talent, energy and will can hope to fight through to self-fulfillment, and usually bear physical or psychological wounds from the struggle. It is significant that the greatest amount of suicide, insanity and tragic death in the arts and sciences occurs among the men risen from the masses, a dramatic indication of the cruel and wasteful hardship accompanying their struggle to emerge. In the Soviet Union talent is given its opportunity; specialized work is specially rewarded; the range of choice in personal life has already been enlarged for the average man, with a prospect of continuous expansion.

One could go on indefinitely with approving comment on the Webbs' book. It is impossible in a review to give any conception of its scope or of the power of its dispassionate presentation. It has been received in the bourgeois press with howls of rage and fear. It has naturally been enthusiastically hailed by all friends of human progress.

What makes the Webbs' achievement all the more extraordinary is that they have for the greater part of their lives been ideologically hostile to Communism. They were among the founders and intellectual directors of Fabian Socialism. They were committed to the theory that cautious progress would avoid the "accident" of revolution; and that capitalist society, through education and piecemeal reform, could evolve peaceably into Socialism. They became important figures in the British Labor Party, Sidney Webb holding posts in its two cabinets. They were also leading figures in the Second International.

The two labor governments in which they participated and the activity of some of the parties affiliated with the Second Interna-

tional must have shaken their confidence in the theory of a peaceful transformation of society. Nevertheless, there is evidence in the book that they approached their study of Soviet Communism with the usual conservative Laborite prejudices, some of which survive.

These come out chiefly in their discussion of the Civil Wars, of the Comintern and of the prospects of similar social revolutions in other nations. They conclude their wonderful survey of the new Soviet civilization with the question, will it spread? Their answer is affirmative but there is the suggestion in the tone of the statement that it ought to spread by the mere power of good example. The revolutionary intent of the Comintern still offends them and they understate its importance and its effectiveness. They would substitute for it an international of party and labor-union functionaries with activities limited to interchange of data and cooperative sociological investigation. They still insist upon national individuality in revolution and write deprecatingly of the Marxist revolutionary movements outside the Soviet Union.

In other words, the concluded revolution with its books balanced and showing surpluses is one thing; but the revolution in process, with its anxieties and risks and menaces of violence, is not so attractive. But this does not seriously detract from what is unquestionably the best book yet written on the Soviet Union.

ISIDOR SCHNEIDER.

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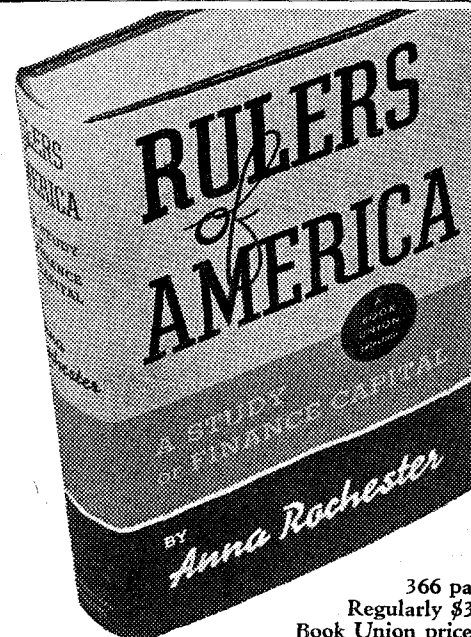
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Revaluation of the Drama

THEORY AND TECHNIQUE OF PLAYWRITING, by John Howard Lawson. G. P. Putnam's Sons. \$2.75.

HERE is a "must" book. Whether you like it or not, agree with it or don't, understand or are confused by it, you can't ignore it. If you are a playwright, you may say you don't need it; if you are a critic you may contest the validity of its conclusions; but if the theater means anything at all to you, your thought and feeling about the subject are bound to be affected by it, sooner or later; so you may just as well start studying it now.

There are certain facts about the book that are beyond dispute and the first of these is that *Theory and Technique of Playwriting* is the first work in which the history, theory, philosophy, psychology, sociology and politics of the drama have ever been treated as a whole, in which drama has been envisaged as a product of the mind and heart of man as well as the result of his nationality, race and time. Lawson is of course not the first writer to consider art as the result of social forces, but he is the first to combine a treatment of that subject with several other subjects that just can't be treated singly, as though they existed apart from the rest of life.

Precisely as life itself is not a conglomeration of isolated study subjects, so a play—insofar as it reflects life—is not an entity existing *in vacuo*. It is, as Lawson says, "a living thing, in which all . . . elements have been fused." In attempting to get at the fundamentals of the art and craft of writing plays, he soon realized that it was as impossible to describe the process without establishing a historical and philosophical background for his discussion, as it would be to describe a human being—his why and wherefore—without going back into the history of the world of which he is a product.

This would seem to be a logical way of going about the job of writing such a treatise, but no one else has even tried to do it. Lawson sees clearly that criticism of drama is really a criticism of life and I believe that one of the reasons why he wrote this book was his growing dissatisfaction with our modern drama on the grounds that, for all the skill and ingenuity that have gone into the making of it, it remains too aloof from life. In other words, the greater part of it comes into being and ekes out its tenuous existence as though its writers were hardly aware of what was going on in the world.

Now it is not enough, and this Lawson knows, merely to urge playwrights to ignore the actual or seeming trivialities of bourgeois life, attend Left meetings and read a couple of books on Russia; Left plays are not necessarily important merely because they are based on certain political assumptions. Their merit, where it exists, consists in the fact that, compared with the great majority of

our modern plays, their authors are aware of other compulsions and streams of thought than those most commonly treated in our theater.

In order to reach this conclusion, which I have so briefly outlined, Lawson realized that he would have to go back and begin at the beginning. "In order to understand a play," he says, "we must understand its psychology and anatomy—what it is, as well as the way it looks." This means that he had to dig down to the roots. In that section of the work called "History of Dramatic Thought" he has managed to digest and brilliantly expose an immense amount of dramatic theory, from Aristotle to Ibsen and at the same time to interpret, comment upon and dissect some of the most subtle passages that have puzzled critics for the past 2,500 years. This section is followed by Part II, "The Theater Today," in which he applies, usually with unanswerable logic, his clear mind to an analysis of the shortcomings of our modern playwrights, chief among which is an inability to root their ideas (and hence their characters) very firmly in life. It is the why that interests him, rather than the what, the deeper motive that motivates thought and action.

The last two parts are long sections on "Dynamics of Construction" and "Mechanics of Construction." It is in these parts that we come to the more "practical" sections of the book. I can't imagine that any playwright reading and pondering these pages could fail to learn something. He could not, I imagine, pick up pointers on how to write smash hits, because Lawson is not concerned with anything of that kind; he is trying to get down to bed rock, to analyze the process that enables a playwright to perceive life and compress it into a work that shall move us.

To say that *Theory and Technique of Playwriting* is a learned book, carefully thought out and admirably documented, is after all to say only what is true of thousands of doctoral dissertations; to declare that it reveals a mind that is alert, a taste on the whole extremely catholic, is to say something that can't be said of many books on the subject. It is, as well, a preachment, a criticism of life, a practical treatise and a plea.

Being a plea, and to a certain extent a criticism of playwrights most of whom are only partly, if at all, conscious of the broader aspects of a new and powerful manifestation of political thought affecting our modern life, Lawson is inclined, I think, to overemphasize the importance of the use of this background in plays. Being an artist as well as a thinker, he doesn't actually insist that every good play must be based on or inspired by the Marxian philosophy, but I think it only fair to say that I infer this throughout his book. After all, in my opinion, it is the playwright's business not to lead, but to follow; it is the artist's function to reflect, to interpret and not primarily to reason. The true revolutionary, the reformer, the martyr, is concerned with action. I don't know if Lenin ever wrote a play, but if he did I imagine it was a poor one; his field lay elsewhere.

But John Howard Lawson's book, take it for all in all, is a monument and a landmark, a mental stimulant, a work that changes one's attitude, causes one to question again the conclusions that once seemed final, to go back to the comfortable maxims one used to consider unassailable; a work that by its intellectual moderation will cause even the most unregenerate conservative writer (if he reads it) to ask himself whether indeed he is doing his job, when he limits his horizon to that tiny segment of the universe he calls his world.

BARRETT CLARK.

Social Insurance

SOCIAL SECURITY IN THE UNITED STATES: An Analysis and Appraisal of the Federal Social Security Act, by Paul H. Douglas. Whittlesey House. \$3.

AGE BEFORE BOOTY: An Explanation of the Townsend Plan, by Morgan J. Dorman. G. P. Putnam's Sons. \$1.

THE TOWNSEND PLAN: Taxing for Sixty, by Nicholas Roosevelt. Doubleday, Doran. 50 cents.

THE TOWNSEND PLAN: What It Is and What It Isn't, by Alex Bittelman. Workers Library Publishers. 5 cents.

MAKE no mistake about it: Townsendites, advocates of the Frazier-Lundeen Bill, and many spokesmen for the Federal Social Security Act have much in common in their battle for social insurance. On some fundamental issues the differences among

them are not unbridgeable. It is encouraging that out of the factional dispute which has clouded the issues of social security, there are emerging basic points of virtual agreement; and in view of the reactionary forces whose opposition jeopardizes all kinds of social insurance, they cannot be too strongly emphasized.

Paul H. Douglas, long regarded as a proponent of "conservative" social legislation, in his new book subjects the Federal Social Security Act to an exhaustive and damaging analysis. "The Social Security Act," Douglas writes, "should not be regarded as the triumphant and perfect conclusion to the struggle to obtain greater security. It is on the contrary full of weaknesses and is strikingly incomplete. If we are to progress, the act should be regarded as merely a first step which must soon be followed by others."

The achievement of the steps envisioned

by Douglas would all but scrap the existing act. Douglas opposes the state-system of unemployment insurance and sees the wisdom of a nation-wide system. He condemns the failure of the act to establish minimum old-age pensions; recognizing that the states will misuse their freedom, he demands that outright federal funds be granted to make the pensions adequate. He cites Germany to show the folly of excluding the self-employed from unemployment insurance benefits; if the self-employed are not to be driven into fascist ranks, Douglas insists, they must be included in the insurance system. He foresees that the control of the act will be vested in politicians unless workers are represented on administrative bodies.

Douglas's most vital criticism of the act, however, centers about the question—Who will pay for it? As an advocate of higher wages, as a firm believer in the efficacy of increased purchasing power to mitigate depressions, Douglas is compelled to reject the financial methods provided in the act. He particularly warns against the dangers latent in the compulsory old-age insurance provision which in effect levies a six-percent income tax on workers, and will create huge annuity reserves.

The accumulation of these reserves [Douglas points out] will beyond doubt greatly decrease the amount of purchasing power which otherwise would be spent upon consumers' goods. . . . Since our society seems to have suffered during the twenties from too large a proportion of the national income being reinvested and too small a proportion being used for consumers' goods, the withdrawal of such huge amounts from current consumption may well help to create a further state of unbalance in the future.

The viciousness of compelling workers to pay for social insurance is now recognized in all progressive quarters. A recent editorial in *The Nation* speaks bitterly of "... the enormous pay-roll levies imposed by the

Social Security Act . . . A more effective method of forcing the poor to shoulder the burdens of capitalist insecurity could scarcely have been devised . . . the final outcome of the Social Security Act will be to relieve taxation on the wealthy and to accentuate the maldistribution of wealth which lies at the root of economic instability." Accordingly, Douglas calls for a "... lifting of a portion of the costs of social insurance from the backs of workers and consumers and for their assumption by the federal government. Nothing will be gained, however, if these funds are then derived from taxes on consumption. In order that these costs may be borne with the least sacrifice, they should be met from taxes on excess profits and on the upper brackets of personal incomes."

Far in advance of the usual social reformer, Douglas is troubled by the broader problems involved in social security. At the outset, he makes this striking declaration:

In its larger aspects, the law is in the tradition which the Western European nations established during a period of expanding capitalism. Whether our newly established system can survive in its present form will depend not only upon the Supreme Court but also upon whether or not capitalism itself will continue in a substantially healthy state. If unemployment should maintain its present level for a long period, then it is quite clear that we shall have to use methods very different from those laid down in the present act.

Where is Douglas going? Point by point, the criticisms he levels against the Federal Social Security Act are so nearly identical with those raised by the proponents of the Frazier-Lundeen Bill that he can be regarded only as an ally. Beyond question, he shows himself to be much closer in spirit to the Frazier Bill than to the existing legislation. While he nowhere states that he favors the bill, he seems unwilling to pronounce against it. He evades taking a stand by

citing the criticisms brought by others, "which to them made the proposal [the Lundeen Bill] highly impracticable."

Douglas has written a significant book—far more significant, in fact, than he himself may realize. He exemplifies that large and influential group—Abraham Epstein and Dr. Rubinow, for example, would be included—which is growing increasingly hostile to the shadow-boxing of the administration. They belong with us rather than with the administration wheelhorses who are using social security for political ends.

Fortunately, the American people did not wait for Douglas to expose the Social Security Act. The ever-growing Townsend movement testifies to their recognition of its glaring inadequacies. Readers of *THE NEW MASSES* are familiar by now with the defects in the Townsend Old Age Revolving Pension plan. They know that any insurance scheme which depends for funds upon a glorified sales tax must militate against the interests of the working population. The confusion attending the Townsend Plan can be attributed in large part to the hazy, amateurish economics of both its champions and its enemies. Typically, Morgan J. Dorman mistakes a vivid portrayal of the evils in our profit society for sufficient proof of the correctness of Dr. Townsend's proposal; equally erroneous is the presumption of Nicholas Roosevelt that the manifest weaknesses in the plan imply vindication of our existing social order, faults and all.

While it is unlikely that the objective of the Plan will materialize, the Townsend movement will not stop. For the first time in decades, large sections of the population are organizing outside of the traditional parties. The consequences of this awakening, already expressed in mass petitions to the government and in the application of direct pressure upon public officials, cannot be over-estimated. For a penetrating appraisal of these consequences, for an evaluation of the broader issues raised by the Townsend movement, Alex Bittelman's pamphlet is indispensable. Where Dorman is content to panegyricize, where Nicholas Roosevelt does nothing but decry, Bittelman carefully examines the movement's potentialities for both good and evil. The Townsendites are bound to be disillusioned with the old parties. However, the movement will succeed in channelling popular thinking toward the need for independent political action. Herein lies its important role.

And, it must be borne in mind, the Townsendites are not the only group contemplating such action. Throughout the country, local movements for a Farmer-Labor party are being initiated. These movements, still scattered and isolated, are rapidly consolidating. Eventually they should include most of the Townsend forces. The combined strength of all these groups will give an invincible impetus to the realization of a comprehensive system of old age, unemployment and social insurance.

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The Theater

The Government in Show Business

AFTER an inglorious beginning marked by the suppression of the first "Living Newspaper" and malodorous bickerings in high administrative places, the New York division of the W.P.A. Theater Project has been speeding on with magnificent vitality. Three productions, scheduled for three-week runs, have been held over by public enthusiasm and box-office prosperity. One, *Triple A Plowed Under*, is already accepted as an experiment of solid importance; another, *Murder in the Cathedral*, has exploded the Broadway myth that poetic drama has no public appeal—more than 25,000 people have already seen it; a third, experiment of the Negro Theater, has reopened the controversy of "revising Shakespeare" with a challenging adaptation of *Macbeth*; a fourth, *Chalk Dust*, makes pertinent dramatic investigations into the metropolitan public-school systems.

The project is proving again what Communists have always insisted: if the talents paralyzed by the profit system could be set free, the result would be an enormous cultural enrichment of the whole people. It would permit experiment, as necessary to the artist as to the scientist; it would be a testing ground for the axioms which the profit-system, with its gift for nonsensical intuitions, has strapped on the back of the theater. The W.P.A. Theater Project is by no means a liberation of art from the profit system, but it has allowed 6,000 people the right to make a living in the field for which they were trained.

Certain forces in Washington have been waiting to pounce on the project, but if they strike now they face not only the militant resistance of 6,000 W.P.A. theater employes, but a thundering opposition from scores of thousands whose theater-needs the W.P.A. has helped to create and fulfill.

Triple A Plowed Under (Biltmore Theater) has already been reported here; it remains to urge people who haven't seen it to go while there's still time. Tracing the farmer's situation from the war period (when he was exhorted to increase production), through the deflation, milk strikes, crop destruction, foreclosures, etc., the twenty speedy scenes make a primer of first-rate importance. And the resourceful, ingenious way in which the Living Newspaper dramatizes these apparently complex but basically simple economic tangles, makes absorbing and highly entertaining spectacle. It borrows generously from any techniques that contribute to its effectiveness—the most sensible eclecticism—and adds a few nimble devices of its own. Here is a "learning play," if you will, but one which "teaches" in a most compelling way. By its intensive factual accuracy, it enriches the sense of one hypothesis long proclaimed by the Left: that truth itself is enough to make startling and important art.

The Lafayette Theater in Harlem has been turning hundreds away since it opened with Orson Welles' adaptation of *Macbeth*. People who expect a field-day of voodooism are likely to miss the point, particularly if they are bored in advance by any serious creative adventure. Welles works a free hand on Shakespeare's text, cutting, transposing, accenting, producing. The resulting *Macbeth*, laid in some West Indian landscape, at first distracts with its novelty, but by Act II spectators are able to get down to the serious business of understanding the adaptation. There was beautiful restraint in the scene in which Lady Macbeth washes the bloodstains from her hands; a rare intensity in the banquet scene tormented by Banquo's ghost. Welles has remade *Macbeth* beyond recognition, but with a creative purpose in mind. The material almost always merely suggested in Shakespeare productions has been brought to violent life and dressed up in the colors of terror.

Chalk Dust, on the other hand, hardly goes afield for its effects; in fact, nothing that happens in the life of a metropolitan high school escapes some search for significance. Harold Clarke and Maxwell Nurnberg's play (Experimental Theater) studies "the conflict between a teacher's professional integrity and the public school system." That its story is true can be attested by anyone who has gone to a New York high school; that the public wants to get close to such material is proved by the extension of the run to six weeks. There are some good characterizations in the play and it's all solid and convincing except for the villain, the principal, who is as transparently evil as the old movie viper of silky words and slick moustache. If the play could be generously cut and the tempo sped, it would make an excellent long one-acter. As it is, sincerity and a vital scepticism give pertinence and strength to the lines.

Triple A Plowed Under may turn to current news for inspiration, but of course nobody would expect T. S. Eliot's interests to be so vulgarly contemporary. Ever since his first incursions into the past when his admirers desperately tried to keep pace with him, Eliot has managed to be at least fifty years ahead—or behind. While they were hurrying into his metaphysical period, he was already rediscovering Bishop Lancelot Andrewes; and now when they have been awaiting an Eliot dramatic millennium somewhere in the Elizabethan mode, Eliot has fooled them by diving into the Middle Ages. His *Murder in the Cathedral* (Majestic Theater) asks: Was Thomas Becket a true martyr or was he not? Preposterous as this theme may strike people to whom Eliot has been retailed as the "leader" of modern poetry, there is actually no ground for surprise. Several years ago D. S. Mirsky observed that Eliot was seeking

"a definite exit from life" into "a land which does not exist . . . an existence which would have no contact with life . . . free from all vitalism, mystic, rigorously intellectual."

In his ecstatic preoccupation with the church history of 1170 A.D., Eliot has happily found his destination. And he humbly reveals his findings in a work whose interest for living mortals is necessarily restricted to matters of literary technic. As such his play was worth producing, although chiefly for what it should help poetic dramatists to avoid. Less of a play than a pageant, it is peopled with symbols of a special kind: not those concentrations of character which expand richly in the mind of the spectator, but abstractions that narrow into tight allegorical moralities. Eliot introduces choruses, but as the course of English-speaking drama has shown so often, more is lost than gained by such a device. One might say the same of the rimes which ornament a number of the speeches; too often they are snags on which the ear of the listener trips and catches.

While there are passages of fragmentary brilliance, the bulk of the poetry derives its "marvelousness" from a synthetic medievalism which builds heavily on supernatural minutiae painted in mystic "folk" imageries. But this work, be it remembered, is Eliot's implicit manifesto on a subject he has long brooded: the restoration of poetic drama. As such it carries much of the same arrogance with which so much of Eliot's writing has descended on modern culture: an arrogance appealingly dressed in the rags of pain and humility. But beneath the humility is a coarseness of spirit; beneath the pain, socially fatal values. Eliot is no more of a guide to dramatists than he was to poets; and the example of disaster in his new work can have therapeutic value for the many poets, Left, Right and Middle, who have been paralyzed in their worship of him.

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Art

Ishigaki's Two Traditions

EITARO ISHIGAKI, born in Japan, has spent the major part of his life in the United States, and has become an American painter working in the traditions of the West. At the same time, he is a revolutionary painter. This conjunction of forces brings sharply to the fore the relation of the revolutionary painter to his native racial tradition. Ishigaki has solved this problem in his own way. In many respects it is the reverse solution chosen by William Gropper in his painting. Yet both are revolutionary artists; they belong to the same generation; they were born between two centuries; they experienced the World War during the formative period of adolescence. Nevertheless, they approach their problems from opposite directions. They have had, however, two major experiences in common—becoming American and becoming revolutionary.

Ishigaki's rebellion against the bourgeois social order has taken the form of repudiating his native racial tradition. He has sought to take root in the western tradition of art. Gropper has signified his rebellion by repudiating that tradition and finding inspiration in the forms and feeling of eastern art; Gropper works in the very tradition against which Ishigaki rebels.

Each artist in his own way has dramatized the first forms of rebellion—against one's family, one's nation, one's culture. This is the initial revolt of every individual in bourgeois society, who seeks to grow and develop. From this adolescent revolt against the parents, the individual seeks to find his way to maturity. Critical evaluation of one's own social background is the first move of the artist toward revolutionary activity.

Ishigaki is the son of a worker, hence he never was deeply affected by the culture of the Japanese ruling classes. His father, a boat builder, emigrated to the United States when Ishigaki was sixteen years old. Despite the cruel fact of racial discrimination, a superior technical civilization and a democratic tradition provide the worker with more benefits than a half-feudal society. Hence the youth Ishigaki sought to become an American in habit, thought and art. Doubtless in the beginning he shared the faith in democratic shibboleths.

But why had his repudiated cultural tradition nothing to offer him, when it had so happily fertilized nineteenth century French painting? (Manet, Gauguin, Van Gogh.) A study of the Japanese prints of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries now on exhibition at the N. Y. Public Library provides an answer; they represent the popular art of wood block prints in color, made and sold by the thousands in Japan. They were probably the first art which Ishigaki came

in contact with and they demonstrate how an aristocratic tradition of sufficient vigor finally permeates down into the masses of the people and shapes their tastes. Most representative, perhaps, of this popular art are the prints of Utamaro, whose favorite subject was the geisha. The impulse that beats through his fragile and perishable prints stamped with gold and scarlet, grey and smoke green, is erotic. They reveal a rococo art of great refinement and sensitivity—rich in subtle color nuances, composed in line of precise and perfect definition. Beautiful as this art is, to a poor worker's son, it could offer nothing except a tantalizing vision of a paradise never intended for his enjoyment. The young artist who experiences the full impact of the class struggle must find such a static paradise cloying and repugnant, just because it lulls to an opium dream, awakening from which makes reality doubly painful. Hence Ishigaki had to seek his models elsewhere.

Marxism, as well as democracy, grew out of the western tradition. Both are built on the western culture of action whose central core is the deed, whose symbol in art is the human body in three dimensions. Such a pictorial tradition must have been eagerly absorbed by a youth interested in the class struggle and desirous of repudiating the actionless Nirvana of feudal eastern culture, which offers no method for the worker to extricate himself from a serf-like position.

Ishigaki took up the western tradition at a point where the first proletarian art developed—the romantic revolutionary period of 1848. His main theme in all pictures is the world-wide contemporary class struggle. He paints it in the romantic style of Delacroix, thus grafting new subject matter onto the typical western tradition derived from the Renaissance and the classic art.

Yet while Ishigaki has worked in the most characteristic vein of western painting, his work preserves some traces of eastern art—in the manner in which he paints the eyes, and in his preference for circular patterns of composition. This circular motif

is best realized in the landscape called "Uprising" with a white inspector on horseback between advancing imperialist troops and native workers. Here the brilliant color and the converging figures in motion are reinforced by circular rhythms in earth and sky, giving a sense of a wider cosmic movement.

Ishigaki's present style is the result of several different phases of development. In the small canvas "Traffic Problem" he offers the comic motif of a fat lady mounting a bus done in the manner of the Japanese print—using his own tradition for satire much as Quirt does when he makes Renaissance motifs into symbols of derision. Ishigaki has also made his experiments in cubism. "The Whip" uses the motif of horse and rider with the whip in an abstract form; here the horse's flank and the curve of the lash complete an S composition of terrific intensity. In its sombre greys and browns, "The Whip" combines Cubist form with expressionist feeling; in this it reflects the clash of modern life—the contradiction in terms of class struggle and the tumbling towers of the background suggest the industrial milieu out of which this fight emerges.

Much of Ishigaki's recent work has a mural quality and he has a predilection for over-life sized forms—for example his massive portrait of an ARM holding a hammer. He is now at work on a mural for the Harlem Courthouse—sponsored by the Federal Art Project of the W.P.A.—and it will be interesting to see how his large forms appear on an actual wall. In choosing for his mural the liberation of the slaves by the Civil War, Ishigaki has found a sympathetic theme. Discrimination against the Negro in the U.S.A. has affected him deeply and such pictures as "South USA" and "Lynching" are among his most dramatic and moving works. Uncompromisingly sincere, Ishigaki is a painter who will not stand still and the course of his further development is of vital interest for revolutionary art.

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The Screen

"Mr. Deeds Goes to Town"

IT IS no secret that director Frank Capra and writer Robert Riskin make the slickest team in Hollywood; *Lady for a Day* and *It Happened One Night* are eminent testimonials. In their physical make-up and construction (the lighting, photography, etc.) these films are typical Hollywood products. The improvements derive from Capra's ability to inject a warm human quality into his characters, his sense of humor, his occasional brilliant cutting. Riskin working in close association with Capra writes warmly and with great ease. It is a joy to report that their newest film, *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town* (Music Hall) is the first real surprise to come from Mecca since *The Informer*. Behind its sugar-coated sentimentality and verbal and physical gags *Mr. Deeds* approaches the social film.

Other films have dealt with "social problems," some have even suggested that there is unemployment in the United States. (Chaplin of course broached the subject, but Chaplin is independent of the industry—of the "furniture makers," as Capra refers to Hollywood producers.) But when in the middle of the eighth reel of a regular mill product an unemployed farmer says: "I just wanted to see what a man looked like that can spend thousands of dollars on a party while people around him are hungry. . . . Did you ever stop to think how many families could have been fed on the money you pay out to get on the front pages?"—that's NEWS!

Capra presents a witty fable of a young rural lad who inherits \$20,000,000. He is brought to New York by crooked lawyers who hope to get control over the fortune. Almost all of the regular "vultures" try to cash in, but this simple country boy (Gary Cooper) doesn't let anyone get away with anything. There's a girl—a sob sister (Jean Arthur) who for a raise sets out to make a monkey out of Mr. Deeds. And so she does. He falls for her and she falls for him and stops writing nasty stories. But too late, because Mr. Deeds has found out that his only true friend in this superficial city of New York has betrayed him. Just as he is about to leave and get back to New Hampshire among "real people" the unemployed farmer breaks in.

From that point on the film acquires new meaning. Mr. Deeds' eyes open. He sees that this man who threatened him with a gun was not another "moocher" but a human being who wants a chance to feed a wife and kids. "I'm a farmer. A job, that's all I want." So Mr. Deeds in his liberal way decides to get rid of his fortune by providing several thousand dispossessed farmers with land and tools. The lawyers of course proceed to frame Mr. Deeds on an

insanity charge. The trial is a brilliant bit of film. Naturally, Mr. Deeds' plan involves a political issue and the lawyer takes on a Liberty League-Hearstian characterization:

... with the country incapacitated by economic ailments and endangered with an undercurrent of social unrest, promulgation of such a weird, fantastic plan as contemplated by the defendant is capable of fomenting a disturbance from which the country may not soon recover. It is our duty to stop it.

Step by step the prosecution (aided by a bribed psychiatrist) puts Mr. Deeds closer to the straitjacket—but suddenly he breaks down all the charges with ease, grace, humor and a beautiful sock at the crooked lawyer's jaw.

The film is consistent with Mr. Deed's philosophy. He wins the trial not because of his girl, but because he is determined to keep his promise to the farmers (the courtroom audience). It isn't often that we get

an American film with such a "favorable" attitude toward the unemployed man. Certainly no other Hollywood film has ever had an unemployed speak his mind with as much warmth and passion as does the farmer of this film. PETER ELLIS.

Current Films

Soviet Russia Today: Julien Bryan's films of Soviet Russia are the best yet. Although he was limited in his showing at Carnegie Hall the film gives one a good view of every-day Soviet life. These films will be shown once more this season at the New School for Social Research on Thursday, April 30th; tickets 60 cents.

I Married a Doctor (Warner Bros.): An uninspired and traditional version of Sinclair Lewis' *Main Street*.

The Great Ziegfeld (M-G-M-Astor): It might have been a swell story about the famous but little known showman, but the movie Ziegfeld is too glorified; it might have been an interesting film of the period, of show business—but the plot's too thin; it might have been shorter; it runs for three solid hours—a supersupersuper colossal vaudeville film. Of course in the twenty reels you will find spots where Myrna Loy is charming, William Powell ingratiating, Frank Morgan likeable, etc., etc. Personally, I liked the W. C. Fields sequences, but the producer didn't include them because he thought the film was getting "a trifle long." P. E.

Music

THE New York Musicians Union, Local 802, has succeeded in making great headway in its drive to unionize the arrangers, proofreaders, copyists and pianists employed by the local music publishers. Twenty-eight out of some eighty firms have already signed up and there are excellent prospects for the capitulation of the leading publishers by the end of the week, because of the united front which has been exhibited by the orchestra leaders in refusing to plug or broadcast the tunes of certain important concerns.

In the past the plight of arrangers and other workers in these houses has been a disgrace to the industry. Lack of organization has kept them at the mercy of the publishers, who were able to lay them off at will and pay the lowest of competitive piece-work rates. Nor were these the only workers exploited by the industry, for the printing of popular songs is still being done by underpaid, non-union labor.

One of the reasons for the bitter fight being waged by the three biggest publishing houses is the realization that a victory by Local 802 means the inevitable unionization of the industry, from printers to composers.

The same union is now waging a fight against one of the most powerful booking agents, the firm of Rockwell-O'Keefe, for putting Claude Hopkins' orchestra into the Cotton Club for a price said to be considerably less than scale. These charges by one

of the members of the band have already resulted in a preliminary recommendation by the trial board that the concern be placed on the unfair list of the American Federation of Musicians, which—if confirmed—would mean that the orchestras of Ray Noble, Jimmy Dorsey, Glen Gray, and Bob Crosby would have to find new managers. Rockwell-O'Keefe are heavy advertisers in trade papers and it is interesting to note that The Billboard carried the story in full, whereas Variety gave it not so much as a line.

New Recordings

The new lists of the phonograph companies are filled with items that must seriously tempt even the most meagre musical purses. Scheduled for immediate release on Columbia are the second volume of Bach "Brandenburg Concertos," containing numbers five and six, played by the superb chamber orchestra led by Adolf Busch; the Vitali "Chaconne" and the Vivaldi "Sonata in D Major," recorded by the excellent violinist Nathan Milstein and a new recording of the Schubert "Quartet in A Minor" by the Kolisch String Quartet. Victor offers Schnabel in a new recording of the Brahms "B Flat Major Piano Concerto," Stokowsky in a re-recording of the Brahms "First Symphony"; Horowitz and Piatigorsky in assorted trifles. All of these new records will be reviewed in detail in my next column. In the meantime there is the excellent

news that Toscanini has been persuaded to record with the New York Philharmonic before his threatened retirement on April 29. Victor has already made masters of the Beethoven "Seventh" and numerous excerpts from Wagner, using Carnegie Hall as the studio.

Victor is also uniting the excellent Pro Arte String Quartet and the clarinetist Benny Goodman in the Mozart "Clarinet Quintet," with the recording to take place in Chicago the first week in May. And finally, the same company is releasing some new Marian Anderson recordings of Sibelius and Finnish folk songs, the latter arranged by her accompanist, Kosti Vehanen.

HENRY JOHNSON.

Swing Records

ALBERT AMMONS' RHYTHM KINGS. A small Chicago Negro band, whose leader is probably the finest boogie-woogie blues pianist in the country. This new version of Boogie-Woogie even surpasses the old standard one by Pinetop Smith. Decca has succeeded in capturing some of the swing the band exhibits in real life both on Boogie-Woogie and the other side, Nagasacki. (Decca 749)

STUFF SMITH AND HIS ORCHESTRA. Particularly recommended are *After You've Gone* and *You're a Piper* (Vocalion 3200), although Stuff Smith and Jonah Jones play almost equally well in *Ain't No Use* and *I Don't Want to Make History* (3201). The recording and balance are far better than on Stuff Smith's first records.

GENE KRUPA'S SWING BAND. Benny Goodman is at his very best in both *The Swing Is Here* and *Gabriel* (Victor 25276). Roy Eldridge's trumpet playing is a bit wild, as it might well be with such a rhythm section behind him. No vocals, and recommended, with one or two reservations.

H. J.

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In connection with the publication of Granville Hicks' *John Reed: The Making of a Revolutionary*, the Workers and Peoples Bookshops have arranged a symposium. The speakers are Granville Hicks, Joseph Freeman, Corliss Lamont and Alexander Trachtenberg. Time: May 8, 8.15 P. M., at Irving Plaza Hall, N. Y. Tickets are on sale at the sponsoring bookshops.

The newly established Vanguard Gallery, at 3520 Franklin Avenue, St. Louis, Mo., is showing original drawings of NEW MASSES cartoons (daily, 10 A. M. to 6 P. M., through May 2.) There is no admission charge.

Among the contributors to this issue: S. M. Blinken is chairman of the Law and Legislation Committees of the Association of Knickerbocker Democrats of New York City, Inc. Blinken's article in this issue supplements his discussion of two weeks ago, entitled "Which Way, Lawyer?"

Barrett H. Clark, who reviews John Howard Lawson's new book in this issue, is the author of numerous books on the drama, among them *A Study of the Modern Drama*,

Contemporary French Dramatists, European Theories of the Drama, World Drama, etc.

Gil Green is the National Secretary of the Young Communist League of the United States.

NEW MASSES readers will be particularly interested in hearing that John L. Spivak's forthcoming book, *Europe Under the Terror*, has been chosen as the Book Union selection for May.

The judges of THE NEW MASSES Prize Title Contest are busy "picking the winners." They expect to be able to announce their selections within the next fortnight. There are altogether fifty-two cash prizes—first prize of \$1,000, second prize of \$250 and fifty prizes of \$5 each.

Altogether 700 petitions protesting against the Tydings-McCormack and Russell-Kramer bills have been sent to us in response to our request that NEW MASSES readers join in a campaign to smash these sedition bills. During the last few days we have received, among others, petitions of protest signed by 40 residents of Montana: eighteen of Crow Agency, nineteen of Hardin, 1 of Billings, 1 of Corinth, 1 of St. Xavier, and 1 of Sheridan, Wyoming. A petition signed by 61 people sent to us from Washington, D. C., carries the signatures of residents of Maryland, Virginia, Massachusetts.

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